

DELIGHTFUL STORIES







Given to Nathen Hibbs
By his mother on his
Birthday February 28.

1891.





HOME TALKS OUT OF THE WONDERFUL BOOK.

DELIGHTFUL STORIES

OR

HOME TALKS OUT OF THE WONDERFUL BOOK

A SERIES OF ONE HUNDRED DELIGHTFUL FIRESIDE STORIES, IN THE CHATTY, CONVERSATIONAL STYLE, IN WHICH GRANDPA GOODWIN NARRATES THE MOST WONDERFUL OCCURRENCES RECORDED IN THE SACRED VOLUME IN A MANNER TO CHARM THE YOUNG FOLKS BY THE REAL ROMANCE THEY CONTAIN, AND AT THE SAME TIME SOW THE GOOD WHEAT OF DIVINE TRUTH IN FERTILE SOIL.

BY
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PREFACE.

THIS book is unique in some important respects. Bible stories have been told in the words of the Bible and in the sermonizing or didactic style, but seldom have they appeared in the real language of the household and in the sprightly, conversational manner of an intelligent family group about the home fireside.

This home style is that which childhood craves, which childhood understands. Not to be read to nor preached at is childhood's delight; but to be talked with, to have questions answered and explanations given, to give and take in the bright word battles of the home circle. For the lack of this attractive, nineteenth-century style, books of Bible stories and the Bible itself lie neglected and unread by numbers of well-meaning people. To popularize the rich treasures of the Book of Books is the aim of GRANDPA GOODWIN'S STORIES.

In developing the fireside conversations of the book representative characters have been chosen. Grandpa himself, Mrs. Reed, Mary, Carrie, and Charley are just such people as live everywhere. There is not an unreal character in the entire group, and the stories are looked at through the eyes of childhood. They are clothed in the language of home; they are brightened with the queries and com-

ments of a company of wide-awake juveniles; and yet, in them all there is a scrupulous regard for truth and a constant pursuit of the profitable. To children these stories will prove a genuine delight; to parents or teachers a valuable help.

The source whence these stories are drawn is at once the most ancient, the most varied, and the most authentic in the world. It commands a wider and more profound reverence than any other volume extant. Its narratives diverge widely from the beaten paths of nineteenth-century life, but they invariably lead to the higher grounds of a nobler and happier career. To effectively present these romances of sacred writ in the most attractive form, the reader is introduced into Grandpa Goodwin's home. Sitting there and chatting with him and his dear ones, many a happy hour will be passed and many a precious lesson will be learned.

The power of illustration has also been brought to bear in this volume. It is adorned with nearly two hundred elegant engravings, about half of which are full-page size. The value of such a pictorial presentation of truth will be incalculable to the children and their maturer friends. Every one of these illustrations throws light upon the text with which it is used, and the one result of the volume must be entertainment and profit.

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GRANDPA GOODWIN'S STORIES

FROM

THE WONDERFUL BOOK.



PHILIP DODDRIDGE TAUGHT BY PICTURES.

THE WEEK OF WONDERS;

OR, MAKING GREAT THINGS OUT OF NOTHING.

“WHEN Grandpa comes I will ask him,” said little Charley Reed to his sister Carrie, who had been telling him how the world was made. Her teacher had told her that God made all things out of nothing. Carrie was but two years older than Charley, yet she thought herself quite competent to be his teacher. But Charley was full of questions, and it was not many minutes before he had completely puzzled Carrie, and it was his unsatisfied curiosity about this making of the world that prompted his resolution to ask Grandpa about it.

Carrie and Charley, with their older sister Mary and their mother, lived at Grandpa's house, their father being away from home much of the time attending to business. Grandpa, or “Grandpa Goodwin,” as many persons called him, was Mrs. Reed's father, and he was very fond of his “little pets,” the grandchildren. But his fondness was not of a foolish sort. It did not show itself in candies and cakes half so often as in kind and wise words and acts, which made the children happier and better. They believed in Grandpa. They were sure he knew everything, and that he could do everything that was worth doing. Grandpa Goodwin did know a great many things, for he had always loved to read good books and to listen to wise men, and he had a wonderfully happy knack in telling what he knew.

Charley waited very impatiently for Grandpa's return. He had never seen anything made out of nothing. His top, he argued, was made out of wood and iron. His pocket-knife was made of iron and steel and bone. His shoes were made of leather.

and leather was made of skins, and the skins had grown on cows. So Charley thought over very many things, but they all were made out of something. Then he thought how big the world was and how many things were made up in it. Where did all the dirt come from, and the rocks that make the great mountains? Then he thought about the ocean, which he had seen at Long Branch, and he wondered where all the water came from. So his ideas grew bigger and bigger, and there were so many things he wanted to ask about that he wished and waited and looked and longed for the sight of Grandpa hurrying home. At last Charley did see him coming, and ran to meet him. Hardly waiting for the kiss Grandpa stooped to give him, he broke out very eagerly with the question, "Where did God get things to make the world of, Grandpa?"

Grandpa Goodwin was too wise a man to answer such a big question carelessly. He never gave the children a false or evasive answer. He used to say, "When a child wants to learn, then is the time to teach." So Grandpa did not answer Charley's question, but roused his curiosity still further by asking, "How many things did God need to make a world?"

"Oh! I don't know," said the boy, "but ever so many things, I'm sure. There are stones and trees and dirt and water and horses and—oh! I don't know, Grandpa; but tell me, where did God get them? Did He make them out of nothing? Carrie said He did, but He didn't, did He? He couldn't do that, could He, Grandpa?"

By this time they were fairly in the house, and Grandpa felt more than ever that what he might say should be wisely said, so he told Charley that after supper they would sit down for a good talk on how God made the world.

When supper was over the family gathered in the sitting-room about the centre-table, on which a bright light burned. Grandpa was in his easy-chair, while Charley, restless and eager, was close beside him. Carrie looked a little anxious, as though half afraid that her well-meant lesson of the afternoon would prove incorrect. Mary

had brought her Bible, which she opened at the first chapter of Genesis, so that she might see what was there said about the creation. Mrs. Reed sat in her sewing-chair doing some fancy work, and anticipating a pleasant evening.

"Now, Grandpa," began Charley, "do please tell us how God made the world. I am almost crazy to hear all about it."

"To tell all about it," replied Grandpa, "is more than any man can do. We have neither time nor knowledge for so great a task. But I can tell you many things about it, and shall do so very willingly. To give you a fair start, will Mary please read the first two verses of Genesis?"

Mary had her eye on the place in an instant, and read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

"When was the beginning?" asked Carrie, who had listened very intently to these verses.

"Nobody knows when it was," said Grandpa. "It was very, very long ago when God began His work upon the heavens and the earth."

"But," interposed Mary, "my Bible says it was four thousand and four years before Christ."

"Your Bible does not say so, Mary. The notes put in its margin by the good men who edited it say so; but this is no part of what God said. Those good men wanted to make the Bible plain for its readers. They figured out that Adam was created four thousand and four years before Christ came, but that time is probably far too short. The beginning, however, was long before Adam was created."

"Why," said Carrie, "did not God make all things in six days?"

"Yes, Carrie, but not in six short days such as we have. A day may be a very long period of time. God's seventh day of rest from creating has lasted six thousand years already. If the other days were as long, thirty-six thousand years passed between the beginning and

the time of Adam's creation. The fact is, that many more years passed—how many, nobody knows. But that far-off beginning was not God's beginning. He never had a beginning. He is eternal. He always did live, and always will live. And in that beginning God was able to create the heaven and the earth."

"What does *create* mean, Grandpa?" asked Charley.

"Mary may read you an answer from the dictionary. That, I think, will give the clearest and best explanation."

"Create," said Mary, who quickly found the word, "means—to bring into being; to form out of nothing; to cause to exist."

"Yes," said Grandpa, "and that is exactly what God did. He did not take a quantity of material and make it into a sun, a moon, a star, or a world, but He brought them into being; He formed them out of nothing; He caused them to exist, as the dictionary explains 'create.' In Hebrews xi, 2, it is said, 'Things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;' that is, nothing appears anywhere out of which the things we now see—the heavens and the earth—were made."

"This verse in Hebrews," said Mary, who had turned to the text quoted by Grandpa, "also says, 'The worlds were framed by the *word* of God.' What does that mean?"

"It means that they were made, not by any work or effort of God, but simply by His command. The third verse of Genesis tells us, 'God *said*, Let there be light; and there was light.' In one of the Psalms we read, 'He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.'"

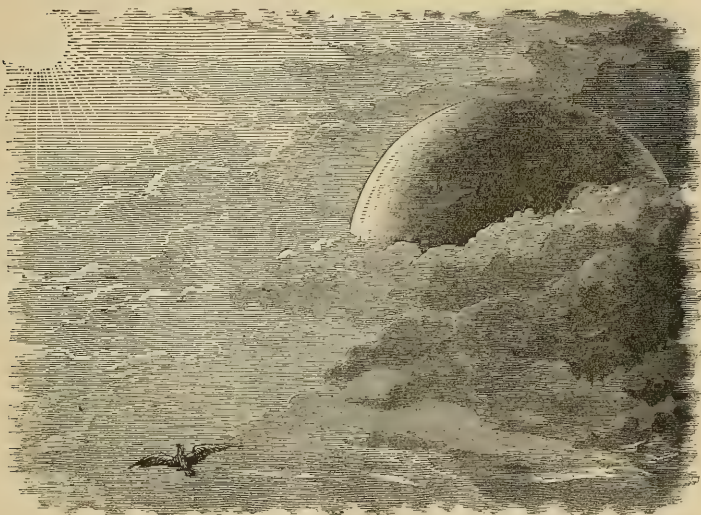
"I told you so, Charley," shouted Carrie, who was delighted to find her afternoon's teaching approved by Grandpa.

"Well," said Charley, "that's a new way to make things. 'He spake, and it was done.' I wish I could make things I want so easily. I'd speak for a lot of 'em, I know."

"But what is meant by this," asked Mary, as she again read from Genesis—"The earth was without form and void?"

"Simply that it had none of the regularity and beauty we now see. But God was taking care of it. His Spirit was there bringing things into proper shape. At first total darkness rested everywhere, but God spoke, and light broke in, showing for the first time the difference between day and night. Thus much was done in God's first day of creating."

"His Monday," said Carrie, "for it was His first work-day."



"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."—Genesis i, 2.

"Yes, you may call it so," said Grandpa, "only remember it was not a day of twenty-four hours, but—what?"

"A very long day," they all answered, Mary adding the remark, "Thousands of years long."

"What was God's Tuesday's work?" asked Charley, catching at the new way of naming God's days.

"When that day began," resumed Grandpa, "a dense steam or mist wrapped the whole world. It was far worse than in our foggiest days. But this steam was cooling, and as steam cools it becomes water. This water gathered on the surface of the earth and soon began to trickle into the deeper places, where creeks, rivers, lakes, and seas began to form. The lighter masses of steam floated upward as clouds, leaving the open space, called the firmament, which we see between the clouds above and the earth below. This clearing away of the vapor and forming of water and clouds was God's second day's work."

"God's Tuesday's work, Grandpa," said Charley; "you forget the name. But oh! what a queer-looking world it must have been!"

"Yes," said Grandpa, "but it soon began to look better, for on the third day—Wednesday, I should say—the waters gathered together more and more, leaving parts of dry land standing out as islands and continents. Then God spoke again, and plants began to grow. All kinds of trees, flowers, and herbs appeared; but Mary may read about this from the story in Genesis."

In an instant Mary's eye was upon the eleventh verse, and she read: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day."

"That was perfectly splendid!" said Carrie, as Mary ended.

"That's so," said Charley, with real boy emphasis, "and everything was bran new, wasn't it?"

"Yes, there was not a dead tree, nor a rotten branch, nor a dried leaf, nor a withered flower in all the world. All was fresh and beautiful. It was springtime all over the world, the grandest springtime the world ever enjoyed. There were plants growing then which

were bigger than any we now see. Prints of their trunks, stems, and leaves are often found in what are now the solid rocks. Coal is but the hardened remains of these plants which then grew so large and in such immense quantities. And God made all those plants with their own seeds, so that each of them would produce other plants like itself. To do this was as if a watchmaker should make a watch, which, after running awhile, would open and push out of itself another little watch, which would grow, and in its turn would bring forth still another little watch, and this another, and so on and on for hundreds of years. What would you think of a man who could make such a watch? But God made all the varieties of the vegetable world, and every variety, whether great or small, has power to produce other plants like itself, and so the earth has been kept green and beautiful ever since the Wednesday of God's great creative week."

"Oh! my," cried Charley, as Grandpa paused in his description; "I never thought of that. How splendid the flowers are!"

"Rather, Charley," said Mary, "how splendid God is who created all these wonders."

"Let me repeat for you two verses of an old poem, by N. P. Willis," said Mrs. Reed, who for some time had ceased from her work and had been an attentive listener:

" 'The perfect world by Adam trod
Was the first temple built to God;
His fiat laid the corner-stone,
He spake, and lo! the work was done.

" 'He hung its starry roof on high,
The broad expanse of azure sky;
He spread its pavement green and bright,
And curtained it with morning light.' "

"Beautiful indeed," exclaimed Grandpa, "and true as it is beautiful."

"Thursday's work I don't understand," said Mary, glancing at her Bible. "God made light on the first day, but on the fourth day

He made the sun, moon, and stars, 'to give light upon the earth,' the seventeenth verse says. Why were they needed to give light, when light had already been given? Or, rather, how could there be any light at all before they were created."

"I don't wonder at your questions, Mary," said Grandpa. "Many older heads have been puzzled at that point. Light had come to the earth, but because of the dense vapors, the sources of light had not appeared. We have light on cloudy days, though we do not see the sun. But when the mists cleared away, and the open firmament appeared, then the sources of light became visible, as if at that moment they had been newly made."

"Oh! I see," said Mary. "God made them appear on that day."

"Just so. If a person had been looking on to report what occurred, he would have described this day's work just as the Bible does. Indeed, when God showed Moses how the world was made, so that Moses might write it in the book of Genesis, He probably showed a series of visions, each giving a new view of the progress of creation, and each forming a new day in this week of wonders."

"The Friday of that week was a great day, wasn't it, Grandpa?" said Mary, looking up from her Bible, "for then God made all the birds and fishes."

"Yes," said Grandpa. "Up to this time there was no living creature in all the world—no beasts in the forests; no birds among the trees; no fish in the waters; no reptiles in the grass; no insects in the air. But the earth was ready for animals to live upon it, and so God spoke again. In an instant flocks of birds rose in the air, flitted among the branches, or waded in the streams. And fishes at once began to stir the brooks, the rivers, and the seas. For the first time, a chorus of praise went up to God from the throats of birds. Life abounded everywhere, and every creature was full of praise."

"Oh!" cried Charley, "that was splendid! Mother took me to see ever so many stuffed birds and fishes in the museum, and they were

so pretty—all colors and shapes and sizes—and God made all of them, and lots more, and did it all in one day. That's something grand, I declare!"

"Yes, Charley, and many other kinds of birds and fishes—far more than are found in all the museums of the world. The splendid colors of humming birds, peacocks, cockatoos, birds of Paradise, and innumerable others, were all the work of God in that one day"

"Well, I am sure God loves pretty colors, then," said Carrie, "and pretty forms too, for what can be prettier than birds with their gay plumage?"

"And their sweet voices, too," said Charley, "for what can be sweeter than the singing of birds?"

"But we must hasten to the last day," said Grandpa, glancing at the clock. "On the sixth day God made all the land animals, birds only excepted. Creatures with wings, and those with fins, were already living, but now the great beasts of the forest were created. Some of them were far larger than any known to us. The cattle, too, were created on this day, and all creeping things. Over the hills the flocks then scampered for the first time. In the meadows the cattle grazed, and beasts of prey ranged through the forests. None were old or lame or sick. It was a glorious world, but God had one more glory to add. This was the creation of man. He was formed to be ruler over all other created things, and to be the companion and loving servant of the Creator Himself. But we must stop for to-night. To-morrow, if you wish, we will take a peep into Paradise, and see man in this happy home."

The "good nights" were then said, and well pleased with their chat on ~~the~~ week of wonders, the little party scattered.

A PEEP INTO PARADISE;

OR, HAPPY PEOPLE IN A HAPPY HOME.

"HERE we are!" shouted Charley; "all ready for our promised peep into Paradise."

"Glad to see you," answered Grandpa Goodwin, as he seated himself in his easy chair. "Let us see what Paradise means."

"I have it!" exclaimed Mary. "I found it in the dictionary. It means (1) The Garden of Eden, in which Adam and Eve were placed; (2) A place of bliss—a region of supreme delight; (3) Heaven."

"Very good, Mary. The word first meant a beautiful piece of country, such as we see in the great parks of our cities. The Bible does not give this name to Adam's home, yet it is so appropriate that by everybody the Garden of Eden is called Paradise. The account given of this garden is very short. We are simply told that God planted it eastward in Eden, that it was well watered everywhere, that every tree pleasant to the eye and good for food was there, that it was, in short, what its Bible name means—a garden of *Eden*—that is, a garden of *delight*."

"And don't we know anything more of how it looked?" asked Carrie, with evident disappointment.

"We do not know, but we can fairly imagine a great deal of how it looked. This is what the great English poet, John Milton, did in his wonderful book called *Paradise Lost*. From the many splendid gardens he had seen before he became blind he selected the most beautiful things and put them all together in his imaginary garden of Eden. Your mother may read us some of Milton's descriptions of Adam's happy home in Paradise."

NO NIGHT IN HEAVEN





Mrs. Reed, on Grandpa's suggestion, turned to her well-used copy of Milton and read several selections. Among them these:

“In this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd;
Out of the fertile ground He caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste—
And all amid them stood the tree of life.”

“Concerning the stream which watered the garden,” continued Mrs. Reed, “Milton speaks thus:”

“Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendant shades
Ran Nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'ers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill and dale and plain.”

“Again, in describing the splendid groves of Paradise, Milton speaks of them as—

“Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind
Hung amiable. . . .
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock, or the flow'ry lap
Of some well-watered valley spread her store,
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose.”

Mrs. Reed laid down her book. The children were all attention, for she had read so clearly that they could catch the meaning of every word. Then Grandpa resumed his talk.

“Into this beautiful home Adam and Eve were put, not to live in idleness, nor yet to work hard, but, as the account says, to dress the garden and to keep it—a pleasant and beautiful business, I am sure. Nothing could be more delightful.”

"How happy they must have been there with their flowers and fruits! But it must have been lonesome to have no neighbors and no children there."

"They had God very near and very kind to them, Carrie," replied Mrs. Reed, "and that was the best of company. They did not know what it was to miss neighbors and children, never having had them to enjoy."

"Yes, and God Himself was delighted with the service and society of Adam and Eve," said Grandpa. "Plants were splendid, but they could not think or feel. Beasts and birds could think and feel, but they could not love God. Their gorgeous colors, mighty strength, swift motions, and sweet songs were grand as they could be; but man was made in God's own grander image; he was as much like God as a created being can be like the one who made him."

"Adam and Eve were born grown up, weren't they, Grandpa?" asked Charley, catching at a new idea.

"Well, yes; that is, they never were children. They had neither father nor mother, brothers nor sisters. They ruled over all other living creatures on the earth, and God brought these creatures to Adam, and he named them as to him seemed best. Animals were not fierce and quarrelsome then as many of them now are, but they dwelt together in peace. Eden was a loving and happy home for all who were there, whether man or beast."

"I wonder Adam and Eve did not stay there forever," said Carrie. "They must have been so happy."

"If they had stayed forever all of us would live there now, wouldn't we? I'd have had my letters directed to Charley Reed, Paradise Garden of Eden; I would."

"That's a great idea," answered Mary. "They did not stay though, and we are not there, I'm sorry to say. But how long did they stay there, Grandpa?"

"We do not know; probably not very long. But there is a Paradise for us, though that was lost."

"Where is our Paradise? I should like to know," said Charley.

"And I too," chimed in Carrie. "If any such joyful place can be found I want to find it, and live there."

"The Bible," answered Grandpa, "often gives this name to the dwelling place of the saints in heaven. In Revelation ii, 7, it is called the Paradise of God."

"In an instant Mary had turned to the text named, and she read these words: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

"Ho, ho," shouted Charley; "so there is a tree of life in that Paradise, too, is there?"

"Yes," answered Grandpa. "Such a tree was in the Garden of Eden, but after man sinned and was sent out of that beautiful place an angel kept him from going back to that tree to eat of it. In the heavenly Paradise, however, all may eat of that tree and live forever."

"There are other respects in which the heavenly Paradise is like that where Adam lived. I wish Grandpa would tell you about them," added Mrs. Keed, to which her father answered:

"Adam's Paradise had a river, and the Paradise of God has its river of the water of life. God walked in the first Paradise, and Adam and Eve served Him there. In the new Paradise saints see God's face and serve Him day and night. But the best of all is, that into the heavenly Paradise nothing shall ever enter that can harm and defile us. Into the Garden of Eden a tempter did enter, and both Adam and Eve sinned and lost their home; but none shall sin in heaven nor lose that precious home. With the Bible's help we may peep into the heavenly Paradise, and we also may be the happy people who shall dwell there and be blessed forever."

"That's where I want to live," said Carrie, to which the other children added their willing assent.

FEASTING ON FORBIDDEN FRUIT:

OR, TRIFLING WITH A SERPENT.

"O GRANDPA!" began Carrie, as the family came together after tea; "I have thought so much to-day about Adam and Eve. What a pity it was they did not stay in their happy home! Why were they sent out of Eden, anyway? I don't see what great harm there was in eating that fruit."

"Probably no harm at all in merely eating that fruit. I do not suppose it was poisonous, or unwholesome even. The harm was in disobeying God. He forbade them to eat that fruit; they disobeyed and did it deliberately. It was as clear a case of refusal to obey as ever occurred."

"Yes, I know that," replied Carrie; "but then it was so little a thing—just to eat some fruit that looked so nice."

"If it was so little a thing, the greater was the folly of not allowing God to have His way about it. But it was not so little as it seems. God had said, Do not eat. Adam and Eve each said, I will eat. It was pure, simple, inexcusable disobedience of God. Wasn't it, Carrie?"

"Well, yes, Grandpa. I know it was; I must admit that. But why did God let them get into so much trouble about so little a matter?"

"If we really love a person we show it, not by doing things which are easy and pleasant to ourselves, but by doing things which are hard, which require self-denial, but which please or help the person we love. You show love to your mother, not by eating your food and enjoying your play, but by leaving your play to serve her, or by

omitting some favorite article of food when she thinks it may do you harm. So Adam and Eve showed their love to God, not by enjoying all that they were free to enjoy, but by doing without the one thing which God forbade. Some test of their love was necessary, and God made it just one little thing. The result showed that they did not love and honor Him enough to yield that one little point. They preferred their own way to God's way."

"Well, Grandpa," said Carrie, in more of a submissive manner, "I think I understand it better. They ought to have obeyed God; but I am sorry all the same."

"We are all sorry about it, darling. A great deal of trouble has come to the world from that willful disobedience. It turned the lives of men into a wrong direction at the very start. It was the pebble in the brooklet's bed which turns the course of the entire stream. And all this trouble came from trifling with a serpent."

"Well, I don't understand that," said Mary. "I read about that serpent in Genesis iii, and I don't know what it means."

"To help us understand, suppose Mary reads Revelation xx, 2," said Grandpa.

Mary quickly found the place and read: "He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."

"Here we see who is the serpent that did the harm. It is the source of all evil and the opposer of all good, known as Satan or the devil," said Grandpa.

"But wasn't there any snake in the business, then?" asked Charley, seemingly disappointed at this explanation of the story.

"Perhaps not," replied Grandpa. "Satan may have entered into a genuine snake, and so have quietly glided up to Eve and talked with her; or he may have made himself look like a snake, and so have come near her; or he may have come to her in a gliding, stealthy way simply, as a snake would approach, and so have suggested his evil ideas. This is my own notion of the case. He came

to her as a snake comes to its prey—stealthily, wickedly, with murder in the heart. When, later in the scene, God pronounced a curse upon the serpent, it was not meant for snakes, but for the old serpent, the vile snakelike tempter Satan."

"Then Eve did not really see a snake crawling around and did not really hear it talk," said Carrie, seemingly much relieved to get rid of the snake.

"Probably not," said Grandpa. "The serpent with which she trifled was Satan; and she did trifle with him. He came asking a question as to what God had really forbidden. He really was twitting her on the fact that she could not do all she pleased, because one thing had been forbidden. Eve answered very well at the start, but when she was about through she used a little sentence which looks suspicious. God has said of this tree, Thou shalt not eat of it. Eve adds, Neither shall ye touch it. God had not said this, and it looks as though Eve were seeking something to complain of, as if she were exaggerating what God had forbidden. On hearing this Satan flatly contradicts what God had said. God's words were, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. But Satan said, Thou shalt not surely die. It seems strange that Eve would listen to such talk. She must have known it was wrong; but she did listen and Satan talked on, telling her how much wiser and better she would become if she ate the fruit of this tree, and making her think God was not good in keeping so good a thing from her. Then Satan left her, but the poison of his talk was working in her mind. Mary may read to us from the sixth verse, which shows what happened and how it came to pass."

While all listened eagerly Mary read as follows: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

"That was too bad," said Carrie, with a sigh and a very sad face.

"Yes," said Grandpa; "instead of resisting Satan and driving away every evil thought, she lingered about the tree, looked on its fruit, thought of the benefits Satan promised, and at last took and ate the fruit, then ran off to find Adam and persuade him to do the same. When they had done the wrong, they felt ashamed. Then they thought of God and were afraid. So they worried through the day till the sun began to set and the cool of the day—that pleasantest of all times in a beautiful garden—drew near. But Adam and Eve found no pleasure in that lovely evening. Their hearts were filled with fear and their cheeks were flushed with shame. Tears gathered in their eyes, the first tears ever shed in the world. They wondered what God would say and what was the meaning of His threat, *thou shalt surely die*. At last God came and they heard His voice, but instead of bounding joyfully to meet Him they skulked away to a hiding-place. Then God called to Adam, Where art thou? God knew where Adam was, but He wished by this call to make Adam know his sad and fallen condition. Then God came near to them in their hiding-place. There they were among the bushes crouching to the ground, their heads bowed down, their tears falling, their hearts full of fear, and the old serpent near by gloating over their unhappy fate. How wretched to God's pure eyes the world must then have seemed! The song of birds, the fragrance of flowers, the glitter of leaves, the sport of beasts, must to Him have seemed a fearful mockery since man, the lord and master of them all, was crushed with sin and shame."

"O Grandpa!" cried Carrie, "why didn't God forgive them on the spot and let them start over again?"

"God was quite willing to forgive them, and I have no doubt did freely do so," said Grandpa; "but for them to start over again, as they were before they disobeyed, was as impossible as for me to start over again as a boy, or for a cripple to start over again with sound limbs. They had sinned, and never again could they be innocent. In some other way they could be saved, I am sure, but not as persons who had never sinned."

"I see," said Carrie, "that first good chance was lost, and they could not get it back again."

"Yes; and God must show His disapproval of the wrong they did," said Grandpa, "just as a kind and loving mother must punish a child who does wrong, and so, when Adam made an excuse for hiding himself, God pushed His questions closer, and Adam, seeing he could not escape, confessed, I did eat; but, said he, the woman *Thou gavest* to be with me, she gave me of the tree. In this way he tried to put the blame first on Eve, and also on God who gave him Eve. That is the way the wicked do. They seldom confess themselves at fault; somebody else, or possibly God Himself, is to blame. God condemns nobody without giving them a chance, so He asked Eve about it and she blamed the serpent. Then God told them the results of their wrong doing. On the serpent he pronounced a curse more bitter than that upon any creature in existence. He was doomed to crawl, to eat dust, to be hated, and at last to have his head crushed; which shows the loathing every good man should have for Satan, much as everybody hates snakes and tries to crush their heads."

"I wish they were all killed," said Charley, "and old Satan, too. I don't see what they are for, anyhow."

"Next God turned to Eve," continued Grandpa. "She was in sorrow enough at that moment, but God said He would greatly multiply it. Not only would He *add* to it, but He would *multiply* it; yes, multiply it *greatly*."

"Poor Eve," sighed Mary, "she must have been sorry enough. And it was her first sorrow, too. She had not been used to it, had she, Grandpa?"

"No, but she soon came to know enough of it; and as for Adam, God said that in sorrow and in the sweat of his face he should eat his bread until he died. The very ground was cursed so that thorns and thistles would spring up rather than flowers and fruits. Such was the result of feasting on forbidden fruit and trifling with a serpent."

"Let me add a word in closing, children," said Mrs. Reed. "You may think Satan very powerful, as he really is, but James, in his Epistle, says, Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Which of you is determined to resist him?"

"I," shouted all the children in concert, Charley adding, in a sort of uncertain way, "I don't always know Satan when I see him. I know bad boys; and I know bad words and bad acts; but I'm not so sure about Satan."

"Resist all the evil you do know, and you'll be sure to oppose Satan," answered his mother, with a kindly smile.

"And then will he be scared and run?" asked Charley, with a glow of enthusiasm.

"That's what the Bible assures us, my boy," was her answer which brought from Charley an earnest declaration:

"Here goes, then, to scare Satan. I'll resist him with all my might."

"Success to you," called Grandpa, as the happy children left the room on their way to bed.

LEAVING A HAPPY HOME;

OR, FROM PEACE AND PLENTY TO TOIL AND TEARS.

WHEN the family were again assembled, Carrie began with the exclamation:

"Poor Eve! I have been so sorry for her. I could have cried a dozen times to-day. Where did they go after they sinned? and what did they do?"

"I am glad," answered Grandpa, "that you have thought so much about her. Let it warn my little girl never to disobey God."

"I'm sure I never want to," she answered, in a most serious tone, Charley adding, "Nor do I;" and Mary, "Nor I."

"And now," said Grandpa, drawing a roll of paper from his pocket and opening it upon the table, "here is a picture by a famous illustrator of Bible scenes. I want you to look at it carefully and then each tell me what seems the most striking thing in it. Let Mary tell first."

"They all look so sorry, Grandpa. See poor Eve! Adam can't bear to look up at all. And the angel seems grieved. The dog, even, looks worried and as if he wondered what it meant. Why the old serpent himself looks sorry, though I guess it's more mean and ashamed that he looks. But oh! they are so sad!"

"Just see the thorns and the thistles outside that gate," said Carrie, "and the stones. Inside there were none of these, were there, Grandpa? Now they will have to work among briars and all sorts of troubles, won't they?"

"See that big bird," said Charley, "he's pecking Eve's head, isn't he? and there's another flying over them and squalling at them;

and there's a wasp or hornet after them, too. O my! It's too bad all these things had to happen. And there's that old snake. If I were Adam I'd pick up a stone and whack him on the head, so I would. I wouldn't have him crawling near me. But, Grandpa, what



"The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."—Genesis iii, 23.

a queer old sword the angel has. It looks as if it was splitting all to pieces."

"That, my boy, is the flaming sword which turned every way to keep Adam and Eve from the garden. We read about it in Genesis iii, 24," said Charley's mother, who was gazing at the picture.

"The saddest thing Adam and Eve knew up to that time," resumed Grandpa, "was the leaving of their happy home. Within that place of beauty were peace and plenty; without were toil and tears. Eve's lament on leaving Paradise, written by Milton, from whom we have already quoted, is one of the saddest utterances ever spoken. Your mother will favor us with part of it."

Mrs. Reed took up her *Paradise Lost* and read as follows:

"O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
Must I leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of God's? Where I had hoped to spend,
Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flow'rs,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye names,
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
. From thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits?"

"Beautiful! but oh! how sad!" said Mary; Carrie meanwhile wiping her eyes.

"Well, my dears," said Grandpa, "you have caught at about all the points of the picture. That was the saddest moving that ever a family made. They had no furniture or baggage, but they had a heavy load on their hearts. And now that they are out of Paradise, I will show you another picture. What is this?" asked Grandpa, as he unrolled another engraving and laid it upon the table.

"Why, there are Cain and Abel," exclaimed Charley, in an instant—"Abel with his mother, playing with lambs; Cain giving an apple to his father."

"How tired Adam looks," said Carrie, "and his hair is all matted over his face, as if he was sweating dreadfully."

"Notice," said Grandpa, "the work he is at. There is a great thistle, there a thorny bush, and there a heap of stones. Adam



"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."—Genesis iii, 19.

has a poor, roughly-made hoe, with which he has been trying to dig out the stones and to cultivate the ground. Cain seems to notice that his father is tired, and offers him fruit to refresh him. Eve seems sad as she looks upon her little boy, for I suppose she thinks of where he might have been had she not trifled with the serpent."

"Why did they need so much fence as I see in this picture?" asked Mary. "There was nobody to come and steal, nor any other person's land into which their sheep might get."

"True, but that fence suggests some other sad truths. Even the gentle sheep were not disposed to live quietly with them now. And other animals were not disposed to leave the sheep unharmed. The peace and plenty of Eden were gone. Fences and force had become necessary. Toil and tears were the lot of Adam and Eve, and of all their children."

"O dear, it does seem too bad that so much trouble should have come to them," said Carrie, whose sympathies were fully aroused. "But they ought to have obeyed God, and I guess they often wished they had done it."

"And that, too, was God's wish," interposed Mrs. Reed. "I have no doubt He felt about Adam and Eve as He felt about His people at a later day, when He said, O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

"And may we have righteousness and peace that way, by hearkening to God's command?"

"Most certainly, Carrie," answered her mother. "That is the glory of the Lord's gospel, and you may fully enjoy it."

"Before we separate, mother," said Mary, "sing that hymn about the peace that floweth as a river, please."

"With pleasure, darling," was Mrs. Reed's reply. Then she sang Mrs. Crewdson's beautiful verses, which begin:

"Oh! for the peace that floweth as a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile;
Oh! for the faith to grasp heaven's bright forever,
Amid the shadows of earth's little while!"

BURNING THE FIRST FRUITS;

OR, A WICKED BROTHER'S BRUTAL DEED.

“ONE of the pictures we looked at last night,” said Grandpa, after some other conversation had occupied a little of the evening, “showed us the first two boys who ever lived. Cain, the elder, was with his father, probably trying to help work the ground. He grew up a farmer—a tiller of the ground, as the Bible calls him. Abel was with his mother, among the sheep, of which, probably, she took care, and he grew up a shepherd—a keeper of sheep. Cain was probably a stronger, rougher, lad than Abel. He was more like the father; Abel more like his mother.”

“I never did like Cain,” said Carrie. “I always thought Abel was a great deal nicer.”

“Cain, no doubt, was a very troublesome boy. He was self-willed and passionate, and his parents knew nothing of the way in which such a boy should be trained. He became tyrannical and abusive as he grew older; for nobody suddenly becomes a murderer. The heart is full of murder long before the hands do the deed. By the continual indulgence of wicked feelings, Cain was prepared for his dreadful crime, and killing Abel was only the natural result. Such a son must have been a great trouble to his parents; he added terribly to their many other sorrows.”

“But did they not teach Cain and Abel to love and serve God?” asked Mary.

“I have no doubt of it,” responded Grandpa; “for the very occasion of Abel’s death was that both he and Cain offered sacrifices, and Abel’s pleased God, while Cain’s did not.”

"What are sacrifices?" asked Charley.

"They are gifts to God," explained Grandpa. "Cain brought fruit from the fields and Abel brought lambs from his flocks. These were the first results of their work and the best offerings that could be found by either of them. To show that these gifts were entirely for



"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof."—Genesis iv, 3, 4.

the Lord, they were laid on a heap of stones called an altar and were entirely burned. Solemnly burning the first fruits of a man's ground or flocks was offering sacrifice to God."

"Why did God want such nice things to be burned?" asked Car-

rie. "I should think they ought to be saved. The poorer things might very well be burned."

"Why," replied Mary, "God ought to get the best, and unless it was burned up it would only be a make-believe gift; for the man would have it for himself after all."



"It came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."—Genesis iv, 8.

"You have the right idea," said Grandpa. "Adam and Eve had taught this to their boys, both of whom came to sacrifice to the Lord. Abel came with a loving desire to please God, and God was pleased with him and his offering. Cain came in some other spirit. Maybe

he was grudging his gift to God and wishing he could keep it for himself. For some reason, however, God was not pleased with Cain nor with his offering. How God showed that He was pleased with Abel we do not know. Perhaps He kindled fire on Abel's altar by a flash of lightning, or He possibly made the fire burn free and clear, or He may have appeared in a visible form to Abel, speaking words of approval which both Cain and Abel could hear. Cain was not so honored, and on this account he became very angry. The Bible says his countenance fell—that is, he looked very long-faced and sullen about it. God saw all this and talked kindly to him, encouraging him to do right, and promising to accept him if he did so. But Cain remained sullen and angry and went away plotting evil against his brother and not trying at all to do as God wished. And so Cain watched his chance, talking angrily with Abel and bullying him whenever they met. No doubt Abel tried to persuade his brother to do right; but this made Cain all the more angry. One day they met out in the field, far away from home. That was Cain's chance. Full of angry passion, he started up and killed Abel on the spot."

"That was awful!" exclaimed Carrie, as Grandpa paused.

"Yes," continued he, "and Cain did it deliberately, having planned it for days. It was murder in cold blood, not in haste, nor to save his own life. Abel was the first dead man of the world and Cain the first murderer. When Abel ceased to breathe, when the color left his cheek and his eye became set in death, Cain must have suffered more than tongue can tell. What had happened he could not understand. He had never before seen death. He hurried from the place, but God was after him, calling, Where is Abel thy brother? Cain did not hesitate to lie, but answered positively, I know not; and then, as if to silence God, he asks, Am I my brother's keeper? So saying, he hurried away from the dead Abel, and tried to hurry away from God, too."

"It seems to me," said Carrie, "that nobody could be more wicked

than Cain. He killed his own brother, and so good a brother, and killed him just because he was good."

"It would be hard to find anything more wicked," added Grandpa, "but John, the beloved disciple, seems to be afraid that we may be as wicked and warns us against being like Cain. Mary, read 1 John iii, 11, 12, please."

Mary found the place in a moment and read: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

"If we don't love one another are we like Cain, then, Grandpa?" asked Charley.

"Assuredly so. And if we prefer evil works to righteous works we are like Cain. We may never kill a person, much less a brother, but without love for the holy and the good we are, like Cain, of that wicked one, as John says; that is, we are children of Satan."

"Or, as the hymn declares," chimed in Mrs. Reed:

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy saints above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

"Well, I'm not going to be like Cain," was Charley's emphatic declaration as he gathered up his books preparatory to going off to bed.

"Nor any of us, I trust," added Carrie. "People who quarrel and fight, who beat and kill each other, all belong to Satan's family. For my part, I prefer better company."

"Good girl!" and "Good night!" were Charley's parting shouts.

THE VOICE OF BLOOD;

OR, A STRANGE CRY FROM THE GROUND.

"EVER since last night," began Mary, when the family was again seated in the sitting-room, "I have fancied I could see Abel lying dead in the field where Cain had left him. It was an awful sin for him to kill Abel, wasn't it?"

"And I," said Mrs. Reed, "have been thinking of his poor mother. I am sure Abel was a loving boy, who always hurried home when his day's duties were done, and who always greeted his mother with a kiss. On the morning of his death he left home alive and well, full of hope and love, and she had thought of him often as the day passed by. At last evening approached and she expected him to supper; but he did not come. She looked out from the door, but could not see him. I can imagine all the worriment of her motherly heart as darkness came and Abel had not returned. She had long been afraid that Cain would do harm to Abel; now she is sure of it, for Cain, too, is away. So she spends the night in anxiety. Adam only half sympathizes with her. He thinks it will come out all right and goes to sleep, but Eve is wide awake. Morning comes, and out they go to seek the boys. Abel's sheep are wandering without care; Cain's work lies unfinished; but where are the brothers? Eve sees something yonder. It is Abel lying on the ground. Is he asleep? She hurries to him. Adam follows. They reach the body. It is battered and bloody. It is cold and dead. Eve calls, but Abel does not answer. She lifts his head, but it drops limp and heavy from her hands. She calls, and calls again, but no answer comes. Then she weeps, O so bitterly, over her dear, dead



FLIFEING FROM THE DEAD.

boy. This is what I have thought of all day, until my own eyes have been full of tears for that poor bereaved mother."

When Mrs. Reed ceased speaking, the children were in tears. They sat without a word for a few minutes and then Grandpa broke the silence by quoting God's words to Eve: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow."

"Grandpa," asked Charley, as if anxious to change the subject, "where did they bury Abel?"

"I don't know, my boy, but I suppose they did bury him; probably right where they found his body. It must have been a very sad funeral, and it was the first in the world. They probably straightened out the cold, stiffened limbs, washed away the blood, wrapped the body in skins, and then covered it with earth. All around was still, but from that ground there rose to the ear of God a voice, for He said to Cain, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

"What does that mean?" asked Carrie. "Blood cannot speak, Grandpa."

"No, my child; but to God's mind there was such a demand that Cain should be punished that it seemed as if every drop of Abel's blood had a voice which cried out for vengeance. To kill a human being is an awful crime, and especially to kill one so pure and good as Abel, and to do it simply because of his goodness. God heard that cry of Abel's blood, and, so far as Cain was concerned, God put a special curse on the ground. Cain was a farmer, but no more was the earth to yield her strength to him. However skillfully and hard he might toil, he would not get a full return. And he was to be restless and unhappy, becoming a fugitive and a vagabond, a wanderer on the earth, a *tramp*, a man whom all should hate and none should love."

"That was a fearful punishment," said Mary, with a shudder.

"So Cain felt, for his answer to God was, My punishment is greater than I can bear. He was afraid, too, that even his kindred would

want to kill him, but this God would not permit. For men to go on killing one another would never do; so God put a mark on Cain that everybody should know him, and God said that any one killing Cain should suffer seven times more penalty than was already inflicted on this wicked man. Then God sent Cain, the first murderer, out into the world, away from his own people, to wander alone, and to be forever full of fears and anxiety."

"I'm glad I wasn't Cain," said Charley, as Grandpa was called away by a visiting friend. "I guess he felt like killing himself too, and it's a pity he didn't do it."

"Possibly not so great a pity," answered Mrs. Reed. "That would have been to add self-murder to the murder already committed. Two wrongs never make a right, you know. The true course for him would have been that of humble repentance and sincere reformation. God would have forgiven him; and while Cain could never have undone the great crime of his life, he could have done much to prevent a similar crime in others, and he could have spent his days in doing good. But we have no account that he did any such thing. He was full of remorse and dread of penalty for his sin, but he did not love and practice any better ways."

"I don't wonder that John, who was so full of love and so good a man, warned people against going in the way of Cain. I'm sure I never want to be like him in any respect."

"Well said, Mary," answered her mother. "May we all walk in the better and nobler ways!"

GREATER AND RICHER; OR, FROM FARM LIFE TO CITY SPLENDOR.

“**W**HERE did Cain go after he killed Abel?” asked Charley, as Grandpa entered the sitting-room.

“He went away toward the East as a lonely wanderer, into a strange place called the land of Nod, or the land of the vagabond, from the fact that he, the chief of vagabonds, went there to live.”

“With whom did he live?” asked Mary. “Who was there, Grandpa, in that land?”

“Nobody at that time, so far as we know, but after a while brothers and sisters of his, with their children, came that way and settled. One of them Cain afterwards persuaded to share his hard lot and be his wife.”

“I wouldn’t have married him,” shouted Carrie, with an earnestness that made the others laugh heartily, at which Carrie colored up and said even more earnestly, “Well, I’m sure I wouldn’t want anything to do with such a man, much less to keep house for him.”

“Cain may have become a far better man,” said Mrs. Reed, soothingly. “Very wicked persons sometimes become very good.”

“Yes, I know,” answered Carrie, “but I’d rather take my chances with somebody who always had been very good.”

“I hope my little daughter will remain as wise when she is grown up, and when some son of Cain may put her principles to the test.”

“Never fear for me,” was Carrie’s merry reply. “But, really,” continued she, “why did Cain go off? Why didn’t he stay just where he was?”

"We are sure," continued Grandpa, "that when Cain started he wanted to get away from God and from all talk about Him. This is what he meant in Genesis iv, 16, where it says, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. He could not get away from God, for God is everywhere; but he could get away from his father and mother and from the other children which they probably had at that time. By so doing he would have no one to remind him of God and of his own sin. That was what he then wanted."

"Ah," said Mrs. Reed, "Cain's attempt to get away from God recalls these verses:

"Is there throughout all worlds one spot,
One lonely wild, where Thou art not?
The hosts of heaven enjoy Thy care,
And those of hell know Thou art there.
Awake, asleep, where none intrude,
Or 'midst the thronging multitude—
In every land, on every sea,
We are surrounded still with Thee."

"Very true," added Grandpa, "and worthy to be remembered by us all. After Cain married he roamed about the country, getting his living by cultivating the ground as best he could. Years went by, and Cain had children and grandchildren. His family became very numerous, and he was a great and rich man among them. Some of his descendants were shepherds and herdsmen, having immense flocks and many cattle. Others were musicians, and some were mechanics who wrought in brass and iron. With all this growth about him it is not strange that Cain made up his mind to build a city, which he did, calling it Enoch, after his eldest son."

"I wouldn't have done that," said Charley. "I think the country is a heap better than any city."

"But, Charley," replied his good teacher, "Cain had two special reasons for doing this. God had sentenced him to be a vagabond and a fugitive, having no home anywhere; but if by building a city

Cain could settle himself and no more wander up and down the earth, he would be glad enough of it. And then he was a farmer, but for him the ground was specially cursed. He never prospered at this work; but if he could get into a real estate business, selling



*"And he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch."—
Genesis iv, 17.*

town-lots and houses, he might do a great deal better. So Cain had special reasons for quitting his farm-life and seeking rest in city splendor. How much he really gained by it nobody knows, for the Bible says nothing more about his history."

"Don't we know anything more about him?" asked Carrie.

"Only this," said Grandpa, "that from the closing verses of Genesis iv, it is quite certain that Cain himself was killed by Lamech, one of his own descendants. This Lamech did kill a man, and in speaking of it he says, If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold (which God had said should be if any man killed him), truly Lamech seventy-and-sevenfold. In speaking thus he seems to make himself the one who receives the penalty for killing Cain, and who may himself expect an even greater protection because he was in so much greater peril."

"So Cain died a violent death, as Abel did, and by one of his own kindred, too," said Mary, in a thoughtful way. "Well, I think he deserved it if ever any one did."

"Do you think Cain ever was happy after he killed Abel?" asked Carrie.

"I do not think he could have been," replied Grandpa. "As the head of a large family many would honor him. In his work of building a city he would rule over many men, but no doubt he carried a sad heart and a cheerless face. Possibly his disposition became better. He may have learned to control his hasty temper; but the man that Lamech killed had wounded him, and was killed for that reason. That man probably was Cain, who, it seems from this, still struck and beat others when aroused to anger. If Cain was not the man whom Lamech killed, however, still murder was committed in the city of Enoch, and a city where murder is, is a city where there are other fearful crimes. So Cain did not escape from sin and its penalties by means of his city life. There is but one city where such escape is possible, that is the heavenly Jerusalem. Amid its splendor sin is unknown and sorrow never comes."

"That is the place of which the hymn tells, isn't it, Grandpa? I mean the hymn, Jerusalem the golden."

"Yes, darling, and we will sing a verse or two of that same old hymn before we say good-night." Then they sang with real earnestness and went to their beds to dream of the holy city.

ALONE, YET NOT ALONE;

OR, THE UNSEEN COMPANION OF A SINGULAR MAN.

"I HAVE but a little while to spend with you this evening," said Grandpa, as he seated himself in his favorite chair; "but I would feel that something was lacking in the day's work if we did not have our little talk about a Bible story. I want to tell you about a very singular man who had a companion whom nobody saw. Can you guess to whom I refer?"

Guesses were made by all the children, and holy men of every period were named, but the correct name was not given. Grandpa then asked, "What was the name of the city built by Cain?"

"Enoch," was shouted in reply by the entire group.

"After whom did Cain name that city?"

"After his eldest son."

"Yes," continued Grandpa, "and some years after that there was another Enoch, and he it is of whom I will now tell you. His father was Jared and his son was Methuseleh, who is famous for what?"

"For being the oldest man that ever lived," answered Carrie.

"How old did he become?"

"Nine hundred and sixty-nine years," answered both the girls.

"Yes; Methuseleh became very aged and his father was very godly. Read what was said of him in Genesis v, 24."

The place was quickly found, and Mary read, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

"When you are coming home from school, Carrie, with which girls do you walk?" asked Grandpa.

"With those I like."



WALKING HEAVENWARD.

"With those you like and who go your way," added Mary.

Carrie assented, saying, "Of course, I don't walk with girls who go another way any more than I walk with girls who stand still."

"Well, now," interrupted Grandpa, "just that is the idea I want you to get about Enoch. As he walked with God, three things are true of him and God. What are they?"

"They both walked," answered Mary. "They did not stand still."

"Yes, they did walk; that is, both of them made progress. Neither God nor men stand still. Men go on becoming better or worse all the time. This is their *walk*. We are all walking. We are going on—you children to manhood and womanhood; your father and mother to old age; I to my end, which is not far off; all of us, I trust, are going to a better world. What other thing is true since Enoch walked with God?"

"God and he loved each other," answered Carrie.

"Yes, they were pleased in each other's society. That Enoch should be pleased with God's company is not surprising, but it is strange that God should be pleased with the society of any man; but in Hebrews xi, 5, it is expressly said that Enoch pleased God, so we need have no doubt at that point. God and he kept very close together, for they were well pleased with each other. Now, what other fact is sure since Enoch walked with God?"

"Why, Enoch went God's way," said Charley. "I guess God wouldn't walk in any man's way; He's too great for that."

"Correct," said Grandpa. "God has His own perfect way of thought, feeling, and action, which He could not and would not change to suit a man or an angel. Enoch shaped his thoughts, feelings, and acts so that they should be like those of God. In this way they thought alike, felt alike, and acted alike. Enoch would not go into any way where he could not keep company with God. Wicked people might coax him, everything in other ways might look very bright and pretty, but he walked with God, though he walked alone."

"Enoch must have been kind of lonesome, walking that way."

"Yes, Charley, I presume he was lonesome as men judge of lonesomeness, and yet he never was alone, though he seemed to be. He always had a companion whom nobody else saw, but who to him was very real, very near, and very dear. Sometimes he would lift up his eyes as if charmed by some beautiful vision, but other people saw nothing; sometimes he would look so glad, but others knew not why; he often would talk tenderly, but others knew not to whom; they thought him very queer; they called him a singular man; but his unseen companion heard his words and spoke tenderly in reply. So Enoch was happy, though the reason for it the world did not know."

"Grandpa, I should think Enoch would have become tired of so singular a life, even though God did walk and talk with him. It seems to me I would want companions whom I could see and talk with as I see you and talk with you and others."

"But, Mary, he did not tire of it. We are told in Genesis that he walked with God three hundred years; so he held out pretty well, didn't he?"

"I should say so," answered Mary, smiling. "But the story also says, *He was not*, for God took him. What does that mean?"

"Turn to Hebrews xi, 5, and you will see precisely what it means."

Mary turned to this verse and read aloud: "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him."

"Oh!" exclaimed Carrie. "He was not found anywhere on the earth, because God had taken him up to heaven."

"Yes, God had translated him; that is, had taken him out of this into another world," added Grandpa. "But long before he was taken there were places where he was not. Can you name some of them?"

"Taverns," began Charley. "In bad company," said Carrie; and so they rattled in their answers until theatres, horse-races, beer-shops, ball-rooms, street-corners, and many other evil and doubtful places

had been named. Then Grandpa remarked, "He who walks with God has pleasanter paths than such places afford, and these paths Enoch found."

"How queer it must have seemed to people who knew Enoch when all of a sudden he disappeared," said Charley.

"Yes, to them his was a mysterious disappearance. They did not find him where he used to eat and sleep and walk and pray. They sought him everywhere; they found him nowhere. The reason was, God had taken him."

"But why did God take him in this unusual way?" asked Mary.

"The reason given in Hebrews is, that Enoch should not see death. That terrible experience God determined to spare this dear companion of his."

"That was good," said Carrie. "I wish more of us might be spared that too. But if we please God as Enoch did we might be spared as he was, I suppose?"

"And how may we please God?" asked Mrs. Reed, looking tenderly at the happy young faces before her.

"Walking where God wants us to," said Charley.

"Yes," answered she, "and the Bible tells us where this is. We must read His word and keep His ways; then will we meet our reward, whether we die or, like Enoch, are translated."

"That reminds me," said Mary, "of two beautiful verses by Bonar. I learned them because I liked them so much:

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord!
However dark it be;
Oh! lead me by Thine own right hand,
Choose out the path for me.

"I dare not choose my lot;
I would not if I might;
But choose Thou for me, O my God!
So shall I walk aright."

A HUNDRED YEARS' JOB;

OR, A MARVELOUS PIECE OF JOINER WORK.

SEVERAL evenings had passed and Grandpa had been unable to meet the children for their chat on Bible subjects, but at last he was again with them, and they clamored earnestly for another story.

"Well," said the kind-hearted old gentleman, "of whom shall we talk to-night?"

"Of anybody you please," said Mary. "Everybody interests me when you talk about them."

"Thank you, Mary," said he, smiling. "I will tell you about a man who, at five hundred years of age, began a job which lasted a century. He was a great-grandson of the oldest man that ever lived. Who was that man?"

"Methuselah!" shouted they all.

"But," added Grandpa, with a merry twinkle in his eye, "how could he be the oldest man when he died before his own father?"

"Why, he couldn't," said Charley, very positively, "or his father would have been the oldest man."

"I know, Grandpa," shouted Carrie, clapping her hands. "His father was Enoch, who didn't die at all."

"Oh! yes, I forgot," said Charley. "So he did—I mean, so he didn't—for God took him to heaven without dying."

"But who," asked Grandpa, "was the man who undertook this big job of work when he was so old?"

Silence rested on the company for a moment, and then Mary spoke up somewhat doubtfully: "You mean Noah, don't you? It took

him a hundred years to build the ark, but I didn't think he was so old when he began."

"You have hit it, Mary. I mean Noah," said Grandpa. "He was one of those singular men who walked with God, as Enoch did. And the Bible calls him just and perfect, and says he found grace, or favor, in the eyes of the Lord. The rest of the world was so wicked that God determined to destroy all men and animals, but Noah and his family God determined to save. For this purpose God set Noah at that marvelous piece of joiner work—the building of the ark. No person sympathized with the good man in his queer undertaking, though many must have helped him. I am sure the people laughed at him and called him a *crank*; but Noah worked away in faith, as it is said in Hebrews xi, and moved with fear, too, for he fully believed that the flood would come, and so he pushed on with his work."

"What was the shape of the ark?" asked Mary. "I have seen ever so many pictures of it and no two of them are the same."

"Nobody can answer that positively," replied Grandpa. "It is not likely that it had a rounded prow, like modern ships, for such work was then unknown, in all probability, and such a prow would have been useless, as the ark was not to sail and to be steered. A great covered, scow-like affair, a sort of floating barn, would have answered every purpose, and is probably more like the ark Noah built."

"How big was the ark?" was the next question. This came from Charley, whose mind ran to the practical side of things.

"That is not positively known," replied Grandpa, "because the length of the *cubit* in which its size is stated is not entirely clear. But we are sure that the ark was at least four hundred and fifty feet long, one hundred and fifty feet wide, and forty-five feet high, and that its appearance was more like an immense block of warehouses than an ordinary ship."

"Why was it made so big, Grandpa, when only one family was to sail in it?" asked Carrie.

"Because," said Grandpa, "with that family there needed to be

kept, for a year or more, enough domestic animals to serve for sacrifices and for all future needs of men until another supply could be raised. Birds, also, and many other living creatures were to be kept there, and immense quantities of provisions were needed for them while in the ark and to supply them for a considerable time after they



"And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him."—Genesis vii, 6.

should leave it. The greatest ship ever built was the Great Eastern, which has about the same carrying capacity as had Noah's ark."

"How did Noah manage to build such a monstrous affair, with nobody to help him?" asked Mary.

"He worked on it for a long time," said Grandpa. "No doubt his family and servants worked with him, and at times other help was hired as needed. Very likely, the neighbors would occasionally lend a hand, by way of a frolic if for no better reason. They cared little for his supposed freak, but went on in their own ways, eating, drinking, and carousing right before Noah's eyes, and under the very shadow of the ark worshiping their dumb idols, while he was hard at work."

"But how could Noah get everything just right?" asked Carrie. "I think he would have made lots of mistakes."

"God showed him how to do it. The wood to be used, the height of the stories, the number and size of the rooms, the window, the door—everything, in short, was directed by the Lord, to whom Noah was always attentive and obedient. That was the way by which he avoided mistakes," said Grandpa.

"But why didn't other people come and help Noah, and get saved in his ark?" asked Charley.

"Simply because they did not believe God," was the reply. "I am sure Noah urged them, for Peter calls him 'a preacher of righteousness,' and Paul says he 'condemned the world,' so we may judge that he was not silent. He did preach. At his work and in his rest, he told the story over and over, and warned the people of the coming flood. Every blow of his axes and hammers was a call to men to turn from their sins and be saved, and yet nobody came. That is why only Noah and his family were saved. Nobody else was willing to enter the ark."

"When the work was all done," asked Charley, "did the flood come right off?"

"No. The ark was finished, the rubbish was cleared away, and it stood complete, but unoccupied, until God one day said to Noah, 'Come thou and all thy house into the ark.' Seven days were then allowed them to get settled in the great boat. It was a busy week. Noah's family, the beasts, the birds, the food, the seed, everything

needed for the long voyage and the wonderful change which was at hand, was brought and stowed away safely; and then the 'Lord shut him in' and shut out all the world besides. So the hundred years' job was ended, the ark was occupied, and everything was ready for the threatened flood."

"Oh! tell us about that," cried Charley.

"Yes, do, please do," echoed Mary and Carrie; but Grandpa shook his silvery head and said, "Not to-night, my dears. To-morrow night we will talk about that, if nothing prevent."

"I remember," said Mrs. Reed, "a little tract I saw when I was a girl. Its title was *Noah's Carpenters*."

"Noah's carpenters!" exclaimed the children, Mary asking, "Who were they, pray?"

"Why," answered their mother, "the men who at one time and another did work on the ark. Though they helped prepare the vessel which saved Noah and his family, yet they themselves were lost. They built an ark, but for them it did no good. They are dead, but many of the same stock live to-day."

"Why who, mother, are like them to-day?" asked Carrie. "I don't know anybody who is so foolish."

"Don't you, darling? Let us see. Sunday-school children who gather in the poor or contribute their money to send tracts and books to the destitute or to aid the work of missions, and yet do not for themselves enter the ark of God's full service, are like Noah's carpenters. Parents who instruct their children in the doctrines of the gospel, and yet fail to illustrate these doctrines in their lives and to seek a personal interest in the Lord's work, are like Noah's carpenters."

"Oh! I see, I see," answered Carrie, "and I, for one, will try to be in the ark."

"And I," answered Mary; to which Charley gave his not uncommon, "Me too."

TOO WICKED TO LIVE; OR, THE GREATEST STORM ON RECORD.

"I'VE been thinking about the people who were shut out of the ark, Grandpa," said Carrie, opening the conversation of another evening. "Why were they shut out and drowned?"

"Because the world had become so full of wickedness that God determined to destroy all its inhabitants. They were too wicked to live. God gave them time to repent though. For a hundred years or more work on the ark went ahead, and Noah preached to them. But they did not become better; so at the end God shut them out of the ark and they all perished."

"Mustn't they have felt awfully when they saw the ark shut?" said Mary.

"I doubt it," replied Grandpa. "The final loading up of the ark was probably a great frolic for them. Getting in the animals and provisions was like a circus day in a country town. Everybody turned out to see the sights. Some may have had misgivings; but there was no sign of a storm, so they quieted their fears. Perhaps a few had anxiety in the stillness of the night which followed, but when clouds began to gather and torrents of rain to fall, then, no doubt, they were full of fear and wished themselves safely in the ark."

"It must have rained mighty hard to make a flood big enough to drown everybody."

"It did rain hard, sure enough, Charley," replied Grandpa—"so hard that the Bible says, The windows of heaven were opened. Windows mean flood-gates—gates which keep back floods of water. It rained as if such gates were opened in the skies, allowing fearful

torrents of water to be poured upon the earth. It may be that up to that time rain had never fallen, which would make these torrents a fearful surprise. It is said also that the fountains of the great deep were broken up; that is, the waters rolled in over the land as if their banks had been washed away. Men then lived east of the Mediterranean Sea where a slight sinking of the ground would permit water to flow from the Black and Caspian Seas on the north, from the Pacific Ocean by way of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf on the south, and from the Mediterranean Sea on the west. By causing the land to sink even a little, this whole country would quickly be under water deep enough to cover every hilltop."

"But I don't see, Grandpa, how the sinking of that one part of the earth could make a flood all over the world."

"I do not suppose there was a flood over all the world, Mary. All the world inhabited by man was flooded. What need was there of more? What the Bible says applies to this narrower limit just as well as to the entire world. Nor do I suppose all existing animals went into the ark. Why should they? All such as might be destroyed by the flood went in and were saved."

"That's a new idea," exclaimed Mary, "but I must admit it seems to be right."

"Were n't there lions and tigers in the ark, Grandpa?"

"Why should there be, my boy? They live far beyond where the flood reached and were in no danger of being blotted out, even though some of them were drowned. I don't believe any wild animals were there, though in this opinion I have against me all the picture-books and Noah's arks of the toy stores."

"Pshaw! the ark wasn't half as grand, then, as I thought it was."

"You thought it was a menagerie, didn't you, Charley?" asked Mary, with a laugh. Charley made no answer, but looked cross.

"How long did the flood last?" asked Carrie.

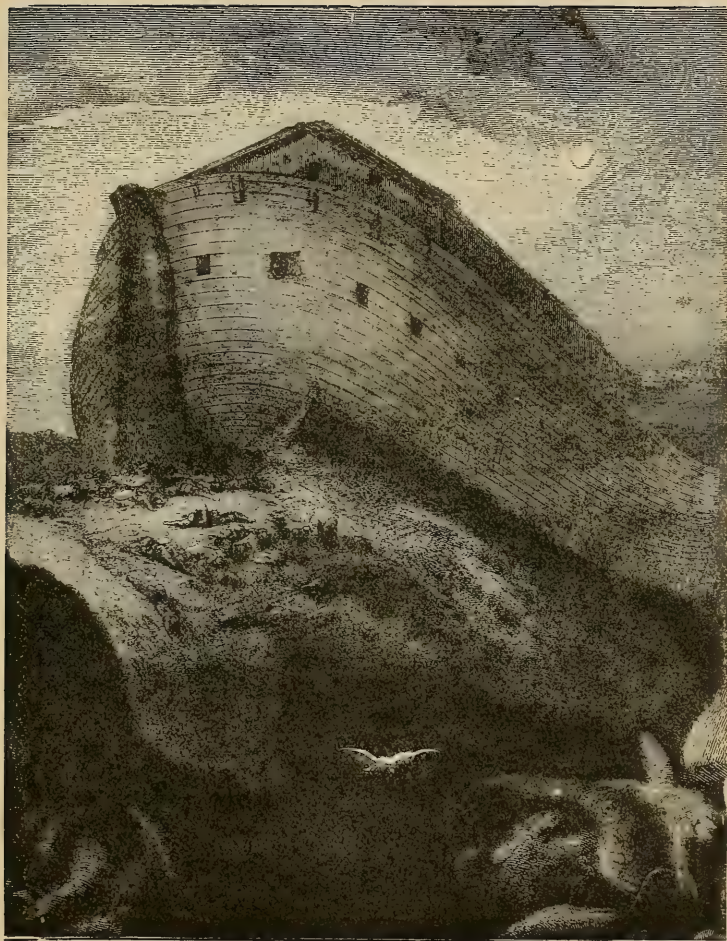
"Rain fell forty days and nights, but the ground continued to sink even longer, and the flood rose forty days more. Then the waters

stood over the hilltops for a hundred and fifty days. Then they began to flow off as the land rose again, and at the end of seven months the ark rested on the top of Mount Ararat. In two more months lower hilltops appeared. In forty days more Noah sent out a raven, which found plenty of dead bodies to feed on and did not return to the ark. Next he sent out a dove, which found nothing suiting its pure tastes, so it came back. After another week the dove was sent again, and this time it brought back a branch from an olive tree, which showed that the trees were budding. In another week the dove was sent again, but it did not come back. Noah then knew that the ground was fit for man to live upon. It was one year and ten days from the time Noah went into the ark till God told him to go out of it."

"Mustn't there have been fearful suffering during that flood?" said Carrie, sadly.

"No doubt there was," replied Grandpa. "When rain began to fall and water to flow in from the seas the people were startled, but they hoped it would soon be over. The first night must have been terrible. Driven from their houses, they huddled together on higher ground. Men, women, children, cattle, sheep, horses, dogs, and even wild beasts, were there. All were wet, cold, shivering, panic-stricken. The awful night dragged through only to bring a day of terrors. Cattle bellowed, sheep bleated, dogs howled, men shouted, women screamed, children cried. Some, caught in the rushing waters, were quickly drowned; others clambered to higher places, and were there overtaken by the rising waters; some reached the highest hilltops, but death reached them even there; some died from fright, some from exposure, some from hunger, but more by drowning. Men, beasts, birds, and serpents clustered on the highest places, all struggling for life. Still the waters rose until every trace of life was gone except the ark, which floated in safety over a deluged world."

"That was awful," said Charley. "I'm glad I wasn't there."



THE DOVE SENT FORTH.—By Doré.

THE BOW OF BEAUTY;

OR, A TOKEN OF GOOD THINGS TO COME.

"GRANDPA, you said it was a year and ten days that Noah was in the ark. But the ark rested on the mountain long before that. Why didn't Noah go out of the ark sooner?"

"Noah did not go into the ark, Carrie, till God commanded it, although the ark had been finished for some time; nor would he go out of it till God commanded it, though he knew the earth to be dried. He obeyed God in all things. Neither his own opinions, his curiosity, nor anything else was allowed to rule him. He waited till God said, Go forth of the ark. Then he and all that were in the ark did go forth, and right glad they were to do so, I am sure. I can imagine how the birds soared, the animals capered, and Noah's family sang praises as they came down the gangway of the ark and stood once more on dry land."

"They must have been glad to walk out again after having been shut up more than a year."

"Yes, Mary. And what do you suppose was the first thing they did after leaving the ark?" asked Grandpa.

"I know what I would have done," said Charley. "I would have ran off to see how things looked after the flood and to see what I could find."

"Many other people would have done just so, Charley," added Grandpa; "but Noah and his sons began rolling great stones together with which to build an altar. They then took one of every suitable beast and bird, and having killed them beside the altar, they burned their bodies as an offering to God. This showed their grati-

tude, and God was pleased. It was no great thing, but it came from loving hearts. It was like the loving little things which children do sometimes, and which make their parents very happy. As the smoke of those sacrifices went up to heaven, the Lord was pleased that He should be remembered in that way."



⁴ *And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him.*—Genesis viii, 18.

"God had been very good to them and they ought to be good to Him," said Carrie.

"And yet," remarked Mrs. Reed, "we are not always willing to serve God first. We usually please ourselves and then ask how we

may please God. With Noah God was first—as He always should be.”

“So well pleased was God with Noah and his children,” resumed Grandpa, “that He promised them many excellent things. They were to become a very numerous family; to rule over all creatures; to eat any food they wished; their lives were to be protected, and never again was the world to be drowned. This last point was the great dread of men just then. The flood had been awful; it had washed away all the people of the world except those in the ark; but now, having promised that another flood should never come, God gave a token or sign of that fact. But Mary may read of this from Genesis ix, 12–16.”

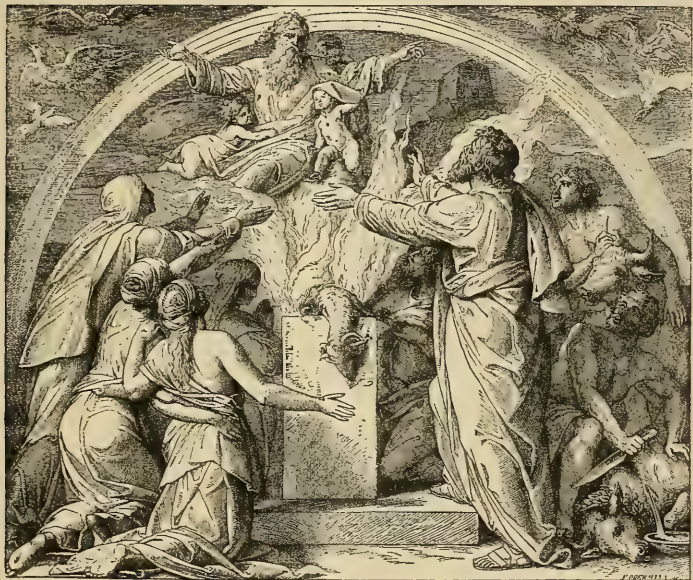
Mary's Bible was at hand, and she read as follows: “And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”

“Wasn't there any rainbow until then?” asked Charley.

“I suppose not,” said Grandpa. “The rainbow is caused by the sun shining through drops of rain, the colors thus produced being thrown on a screen of cloud beyond. It had probably never rained till the flood came. No rainbow could have been seen, then, up to the time Noah came out of the ark. But rain was to fall after that, and with rain comes the possibility of a rainbow, and that was always to be a token of God's good-will.”

“Well,” remarked Mrs. Reed, “I never understood that rainbow.

It certainly was a very appropriate as well as beautiful emblem. Where better could God write His promise never again to destroy the earth with a flood than on the very clouds out of which comes the rain? Whenever again I look at a rainbow I shall be glad of God's promise, of which it reminds me."



"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."—
Genesis ix, 13.

"And so shall I," added Mary.

"And I," "and I," said the other children.

"Did any of you notice, as Mary read a moment ago, what God said He would do when He looked upon the rainbow?"

None answered; but Mary's eye ran over the verses, and she shouted: "Well, really, Grandpa! God said, I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant. As if God could forget anything!"

"Not that He was in danger of forgetting unless the bow reminded Him," said Grandpa; "but that when we look on the rainbow we may think of God and know that He looks on it also and thinks of us."

"That is perfectly splendid!" exclaimed Carrie. "He and we look at the same beautiful bow and think about each other. Don't we?"

"There are two references to the rainbow in the book of Revelation. You have the idea of the natural rainbow so clearly that I would like your opinions of these others. Revelation x, 1, tells of a mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud and having a rainbow upon his head. What do you think this means?"

"That he comes as clouds come," answered Mary; "to bring a storm; but that he will not destroy everybody, for the rainbow is there."

"Well explained, my girl! You will soon do for a teacher. But, Carrie, what think you of Revelation iv, 3? There we read of a great throne set in heaven and the great King sitting upon it. But it is said, There was a rainbow round about the throne. What do you understand by that?"

"Why, that while God is King and does rule over all, still the great object about His throne is the rainbow, which He has made a token of good. So nobody need be afraid of Him, but everybody may love and come to Him."

"Well said, Carrie!" added Grandpa. "Let us all, when we look to God, remember the rainbow, and when we look to the rainbow, let us remember God."

MAKING FUN OF HIS FATHER;

OR, WHEN WINE IS IN WIT IS OUT.

“**W**HAT became of Noah and his children after the flood?” began Carrie on the next evening after the rainbow talk. “I have wondered all sorts of queer things.”

“We do not know much about them,” said Grandpa, as he adjusted his glasses; “and what we do know is not entirely pleasant. They came out of the ark full of praise to God and went to work with energy. Before the flood they had been shipbuilders for a hundred years or more; but that job was done, and Noah went to farming. They had no friends or neighbors, but were just a family by themselves. Before long they had troops of little children playing around and making their homes happy. Of course, they wanted some fruit on the farm; so Noah set out a vineyard—and a splendid one it was, no doubt. In due time grapes were gathered and the juice was preserved. It was a pleasant and wholesome drink, and they put away some of it for future use. But in time grape-juice will ferment and become intoxicating wine; and this happened with the grape-juice of Noah’s vineyard. One day Noah wanted grape-juice, and in drinking it he found its flavor had changed. But it was very pleasant, and, ignorant of its effects, Noah drank on until he became drunk and fell over on his tent-floor in a heavy drunken sleep. Good man that he was—able as he had been to disregard the opinions of all the world for a hundred years and to work at that ark—yet when he drank wine he sank helpless to the ground and lay there in shame, like the commonest drunkard.”

“That was too bad,” said Carrie, her quick sympathy taking in

the situation. "It reminds me of the saying, When wine is in wit is out; for I'm sure Noah lost his wits when he took that wine."

"Any man loses his wits that way," said Grandpa. "Intoxicating drink has spoiled more good men and ruined more happy homes than any other ten causes."

"He ought to have joined our temperance society," said Charley. "We boys don't mean to lose our wits."

"That Noah became drunk is very sad," continued Grandpa. "But that, I think, was an accident. He did not know the strength of what he drank. But as he lay there in his drunken stupor, his second son, Ham by name, came along and saw his father. Instead of feeling an honest grief or shame, he ran off to tell his brothers—as though it were a good joke, a thing to laugh at. He really made fun of his aged father instead of trying to conceal his pitiable condition. Ham's conduct was not an accident. It was a base, unworthy act; and God is angry with every child who does not honor his father and his mother."

"What did the other fellows say?" asked Charley, much interested in the unfolding of the plot. "Did they make fun, too. We boys make fun of drunken men often."

"Not they, Charley," answered Grandpa. "Noah was their father and they honored him, even if he was drunk; so they took a large garment like a cloak or shawl, and holding it between them, they went backward into the tent and covered it over their father so that not even themselves should see the condition in which he was. They were not disposed to make fun, but rather to hide their father's wrong."

"They were noble, good sons!" cried Mary, in a burst of enthusiasm. "I like them for that."

"What did Noah say when he woke, Grandpa?" questioned Charley, anxious to get at the end of the case.

"He slept—we know not how long—and when he awoke he found out what had been done. He was covered with that garment, and

he naturally asked who had put it over him, and why So the truth came out, and Noah was indignant. He spoke some terrible words; but he spoke them, not in anger of his own, but for God, who was angry too. Ham had a favorite son named Canaan. I am sure he



"Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him: and he said, Cursed be Canaan.—Genesis ix, 24, 25.

loved his son very much and would rather have suffered himself than have had his dear boy suffer. But Noah said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be. Ham heard these words, and the precious son was doomed because of the father's sin. Ham had grieved his father, and in turn was to be grieved in his own son."

"But in what way was Canaan cursed, Grandpa? What harm came to him?" asked Carrie.

"From him descended those nations—the African, for instance—which have always been the servants and burden-bearers of the world."

"That seems too bad," said both girls together. "But Ham was a mean, bad man," added Mary, to which Charley added a very solemn "That's so."

"On the other two sons," continued Grandpa, "Noah pronounced blessings, and said that Canaan's children should be their servants. All we know more about Noah is that he lived until he became nine hundred and fifty years old and then died."

"Why, Grandpa," continued Carrie, in a serious way, "I thought no good man could get drunk."

"No good man willingly does anything which debases himself and sets a bad example to others, which drunkenness certainly does. Accidents may happen, as to Noah; tastes for intoxicating drink may be inherited, as in the children of drunkards; men may be so weak morally as to be unable to resist temptation, but still it remains true, as Solomon said, Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

"That reminds me, Grandpa, of some verses from Proverbs which I learned because they seemed so good and true. May I repeat them?"

"Certainly, darling. I would gladly see each of you so firm that your wits would never go out because wine came in."

Mary then repeated from Proverbs xxiii, 29-32, these words: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

TOO BIG A JOB;

OR, A SUDDEN CHANGE OF PLAN.

“HOW did it come, Grandpa,” began Mary, “that the people of the world got so far apart in their looks and their languages? If they all came from Noah, it seems to me they would be more like each other than they are.”

“That is a very natural question, my child. We have seen all the people of the world as one family, in one ark, and on one farm, and yet we now find many races of men very different from each other in looks and in languages, as you say. While Noah still lived his children and grandchildren became very numerous, and scattered in all directions in search of good places to live. Toward the east, where the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers flow, they found a splendid level country, very rich in soil, and here many of them settled. By and by they concluded to build a city, as Cain had done before the flood. The soil was good for making bricks. They found also plenty of bitumen, or pitch, which they used as mortar to cement the bricks together, and so they built their city. As they went on another great idea struck them. Some one proposed to build a tower that should reach to heaven, and at this big job they went.”

“How foolish! Why, they couldn’t reach heaven, could they?”

“No, Carrie, that was too big a job. The great pyramid of Egypt is only some six hundred feet high. That is the greatest work of man so far as height goes, and yet it scarce reaches the lowest clouds. But they probably did not expect to build so high that they could step off into heaven from their top story. It is more probable that their idea was to build so high that they would be safe from another flood.”

"But God had said there shouldn't be another flood," said Charley.

"True; but people do not always believe what God says, and these people seem to have forgotten God entirely, for when the building of the tower was proposed they said, Let us make us a name. They had no regard to God, but wished only to make themselves famous."

"Why," said Carrie, "I always thought that tower—the tower of Babel, I mean—was to honor God, like the steeples on our churches."

"No, dear; it was to honor its builders, and nobody else. They did have one other idea—they might be attacked by enemies, in which case the tower would be a splendid place of safety. In its upper stories they could so defend themselves that no enemy could reach them. This would prevent their being captured or scattered from that place. But God is never at a loss for a way to baffle bad men. He saw what they were doing and heard what they said, and He made His own plan for doing just what they did not want done."

"But, Grandpa," interrupted Charley, "what harm was there in wanting to stay in a nice place?"

"None at all, my boy; God did not object to that. But He saw how proud and selfish they were getting, and He said, Nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. He knew that they would not stop to ask whether a thing was right or wrong, whether it pleased God or not, but if they wanted it they would go at it—so God decided to scatter them. And how do you suppose He did it? He changed the language each leader spoke, so that not one of them could understand another. There they were at their work, talking as usual, giving and receiving orders, but suddenly one spoke words no one else understood. The others suppose him to be in fun and answer him in fun. But no one understands what the others say. Every man thinks himself to be talking sense and others to be talking nonsense—so they talk and jabber in the worst way."

"Ha, ha, ha," roared Charley. "What fun that must have been!"

"Not much fun for them," replied Grandpa, smiling at the boy's

glee. "The fact is that men would not stand much of that without getting angry. It is quite likely that some did lose their tempers and that they came to blows."

"Ha, ha, that's so," said Charley, slapping his hand vigorously on



"So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."—Genesis xi, 8.

his knee. "Big time they must have had quarreling and fighting each other. Guess they didn't work much more that day."

"No, nor any other day. They gave up that job and left off to build the city. Such a sudden change of plan men seldom make and never was a change made for so odd a cause."

"But couldn't any one understand another? Did every one have a new language?" asked Mary.

"For each one to have his own language and understand nobody else would have split them entirely into fragments. The probability is that each family had its own language, so that when a man packed his tools and went home from the tower he found his own folks quite able to talk with him. This would only make each the more certain that his talk was correct and that the others were all wrong. They had known but one language up to that time, and they had no idea that there could be another."

"Ha, ha, ha," burst out Charley again in a most boisterous manner; "what a time the boys must have had trying to talk! I'll bet they made faces and called hard names before they quit."

"And the mothers, too," said Mrs. Reed, "when they tried to explain things and make peace among the children, what a time there must have been!"

"And the girls, too," said Carrie; "dear me! I'm glad I wasn't there. I don't like quarrels and making faces."

"You see," said Grandpa, "that the elements of a first-class row soon gathered in that city, and the only thing that could be done was to separate. The very thing they once meant not to do they now were glad to do. God brought this about by His skill and power. He knows just how to overturn the best laid plans of the wicked."

"I don't wonder," said Mary, "that the place was called *Babel*. That means *confusion*, and things did get rather mixed there."

"And our word *babble*, meaning the noises made by babes, came from the same word," said Mrs. Reed. "The people there *babbled*—used sounds without meaning—one to another."

"So it came to pass that families were separated one from another in location as well as in language," said Grandpa. "Living for ages in different lands, under different conditions of food, water, shelter, and employment, permanent changes were made in the appearances of the people, such as Mary asked about when our chat began."

SURPRISED AND DELIGHTED;

OR, THE FIRST SIGHT OF A SPLENDID INHERITANCE.

"**H**ERE is another Bible picture," said Grandpa Goodwin, unrolling an engraving and spreading it on the table. "I want you to look it over carefully and tell me what you suppose it to show."

After a good deal of looking and talking, the children agreed they could not tell. Nothing in the picture reminded them of anything they had read or heard of in the Bible.

Grandpa then followed with the question: "What to you, Mary, is the main thing of this picture?"

"The angel who is directing the company. He seems to be pointing them to the country off to the left, toward which they are all looking."

"And who are the persons riding, Carrie?"

"I don't know their names," replied she; "but there is an old man in the middle with a young man and a young woman. They look surprised; but whether at something pleasant or not, I'm not sure."

"What have you to say about the picture, Charley?"

"I was wondering about those boys who are cutting capers in front of the donkeys. They'll get run over if they're not careful. Anyhow, I'd rather walk than ride a donkey. But if I were there, I'd get on one of the camels. I'd like to ride on a camel."

"You get the points of the picture very well," said Grandpa; "but what it represents you don't catch. Mary, please read Genesis xii, 4, 5."

Mary turned as directed and read thus: "So Abram departed, as

the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had



"They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."—
Genesis xii, 5.

gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

"We can all tell now who the people are," said Mrs. Reed, as Mary finished the verses, to which the children responded by pointing out one and another of the persons, and saying, as she did so:

"That's Abram;" "And that's Sarai;" "This is Lot;" "Here are the servants;" "Here are the flocks," and so on until almost every point of the picture was covered by some one. Then Charley asked: "Who's boys are these?—Abram's?"

"No," answered Grandpa; "Abram had no boys; nor had Lot—so far as we know. They are probably children of some of the servants; but Abram allows the lads to cut capers, as you put it, and to have a good time as they journey on."

"Do, Grandpa, tell us the story about Abram. I want so much to hear about this journey," said Carrie; and the others heartily seconded her request.

On this invitation, Grandpa settled himself in his chair and began: "About four hundred years after the flood, when the inhabitants of the world had again become very many, there was a man named Abram, who lived at Ur, in the land of Chaldea, away to the east of Palestine. When he was over seventy years old, God told him to leave his own country and all his kindred and go to a place which should be shown him. Where that place was, or what it was, Abram did not know. But he started, as Paul says of him, Not knowing whither he went."

"Good for him!" exclaimed Charley. "He wasn't afraid to travel if he was old. Was he?"

"No. But though he started so well, he did not fully obey God and leave his kindred; for he took Terah, his father, and Lot, his nephew, with him. No doubt he loved them; but he had been told to leave them, and he ought to have done just that. When they had gone about half way on their journey they stopped at a place called Haran, where, after a delay of two years, Terah died. After his death Abram started again to go into Canaan, and into Canaan he did go, as Mary read. As he entered this land from Haran he passed along the hills at the foot of the Lebanon mountains, and off to his left, as shown in the picture, the promised land could be seen. Its hills and valleys; its famous river, the Jordan; and its great lake, the Sea of Galilee—

all were clearly seen. Abram had always lived in a flat country, so that the view of this splendid, rolling land must have been to him particularly charming. It would surprise and delight him at every step of his journey. Charmed by his new surroundings, Abram journeyed on into the very heart of the country. Wherever he stopped on his way he built an altar and worshiped God, who had so kindly led him. This is the journey shown in the picture. It was one in which they had reason to be happy every moment."

"So I think," said Charley. "And now I don't wonder the boys are dancing along in such a jolly way."

"But no man's path is always full of sunshine," resumed Grandpa. "Abram soon found that his two years' delay in Haran was to cost him very dearly. A famine was just then beginning in Canaan. The water failed, the grass dried, and no food could be found. Had Abram reached there two years sooner he would have been ready for this trouble. But what could a stranger do who had just arrived in the country? So Abram could not stop in Canaan. He had to move on and on toward the south and southwest, until he came to Egypt. Here was plenty of food. But after a while he had trouble with the King, who wanted to marry Abram's wife. Abram could not stay there any longer; so back again he went to Canaan, sorry enough, I am sure, that he had lost those two years at Haran."

"Guess the boys didn't dance so much that time," said Charley, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Probably not, Charley," added Grandpa. "But when they got back to Canaan the famine was over and all the country was green and beautiful. Then Abram was ready really to settle in the land and the boys were ready once more to cut their capers."

"All's well that ends well," added the boy, feeling that the end was all that could be desired.

TRUE NOBILITY:

OR, STOOPING TO CONQUER.

"BEFORE Abram went into Egypt," began Grandpa, as the family was awaiting the expected talk, "he had stopped at a place called Bethel. It is up on the highlands of Palestine, northeast of the city of Jerusalem. Toward the east of Bethel this high ground falls off rapidly to the plain of Jericho. This plain is a rich, broad piece of land, east of which the Jordan flows. The Jordan is very crooked and rapid, rushing and tumbling on its way from the Sea of Galilee on the north to the Dead Sea on the south. From Bethel one looks down upon the river winding through its beautiful green banks and stretching away mile after mile in either direction. On that high ground, overlooking the beautiful river scene below, Abram and Lot pitched their tents when they came back from Egypt. Both of them had become very rich, having immense flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, with tents, slaves, silver, and gold. Indeed, they had such great possessions that the place where they settled was not big enough for them; and their servants, for the want of room, fell to quarreling and fighting among themselves. This was a great grief to Abram. The old inhabitants of the land saw it and sneered at him and his religion because his servants behaved so badly. Abram at last determined to stop this disgraceful conduct, and how do you suppose he did it?"

"I know what I'd have done if I'd been Abram," responded Charley, shaking his head with a decided air—"I'd have bounced every fellow that quarreled. I wouldn't have had such chaps about the place."

"I think he would have done better to clear out Lot bag and bag-

gage," said Mary, warmly. "God did not tell Abram to take Lot, anyway, but to leave him. Abram brought Lot along, and had been a good, kind uncle to him, and now that Lot had grown rich he had grown saucy too. It was mean of him to let his men interfere with Abram's. Abram had the best right there. God called him, but didn't call Lot."

"Well! well!" exclaimed Grandpa, with an amused look, "Abram's interests are not likely to suffer in your hands, Mary. But what you say is really very forcible. The probability is that Lot came with Abram solely because he saw a chance to make money. When he and Abram had come to be in each other's way, Lot should have stepped out of the way."

"Abram would have done just right had he driven Lot off," suggested Carrie.

"He might have done that," answered Grandpa, "or he might have talked with Lot and insisted on his going, or he might have claimed the land as his by gift from God. Then, too, as the younger, Lot should have given way to his elder and superior, as Abram certainly was; but Lot did not move in the matter. He did not seem troubled over the quarrels of the men nor concerned about what the neighbors thought. At last, therefore, Abram called Lot aside, and what, suppose you, he said?"

"Get away, or I'll blow you out," shouted Charley.

"Oh! no, Charley; Abram did not talk like a thoughtless boy," interposed Mrs. Reed, "and I am glad he did not."

"Mary may turn to Genesis xiii, 8, 9, and see what he said," added Grandpa.

Mary found the place and read as follows: "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right: or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."



ABRAM'S MAGNANIMOUS OFFER.

"Wasn't that splendid?" exclaimed Mary, as she finished reading. "That was really noble, wasn't it, Grandpa?"

"It certainly was. Abram did show true nobility in this offer. Instead of clamoring for his rights or acting selfishly, he waived them all and at once settled the trouble. In short, he stooped to conquer. He made himself the less that he might secure peace, and in so doing he became immensely the greater. He acted according to a rule which Jesus put into words 2,500 years later, when He said, Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

"What did Lot say, Grandpa? I think he must have felt flat when Abram talked to him that way."

"He does not seem to have felt flat, Charley. He looked down into the beautiful Jordan valley; he saw how green it was and how well watered, and said he, I'll take this for my share. He was quick to fall in with Abram's offer. That he owed anything to his uncle does not seem to have occurred to him. Abram must have felt that Lot was selfish and mean, but he nobly granted Lot his choice, and that day the two rich chieftains separated from each other."

"Good riddance to him," exclaimed Mary.

"But he was not rid of him, my child," said Grandpa. "Abram had a great deal more trouble with Lot, of which I will tell you. Lot was not long in gathering all his live stock and other treasures together, and soon was on his journey down the hillside to the plain below. Over the southern end of this plain little cities were scattered; and though he left his flocks and herds on the plain of Jericho, he himself moved on toward Sodom, the very worst of those cities, and there he pitched his tent. The men of Sodom are said to have been wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. That is the Bible statement about them, and yet among those vile persons Lot went to live with his family."

"Why did he do such a foolish thing?" inquired Carrie. "I should

think he would want to keep as far as possible from such persons. He had plenty of room in the fields, hadn't he, without going to that city?"

"Why he settled there we can readily judge," was Grandpa's answer. "Lot went into the valley to make money. It was a warm, unhealthy place, but it promised large profits. Sodom was the chief city of the vicinity, and for this reason was an attractive place for him, and his family who had seen but little of city life. Lot was not quite willing to go at once into the city to live, but he set up his tent near it. By one writer of the Bible he is called a *righteous man*. He did not plunge headlong into so wicked a place as Sodom, but pitched his tent outside the city, and yet near by. The next news we have of him, however, is that he had really gone into the city to live. He had taken a house there, and was settled among its vile inhabitants."

"That's the way people do," said Carrie. "They don't mean any great harm, but once started, on they go, and do far worse at the end than they ever meant to."

"Yes," said Grandpa, "entering into sin is like entering into a net. The danger seems small at first, but once in, every moment makes matters worse and fastens the captive tighter—so Lot became entangled, and directly we find him sitting at the gate of Sodom. The gates of a city were cool, sheltered places, where idlers loved to sit and talk and see the passers-by. Lot had become so far like the men of Sodom that he sat and chatted with them in these public places. He was quite at home among them. He had become more and more entangled in their net. Then his daughters married and settled in Sodom; but so far did Lot fall from the right and the good way, that when he tried to warn them of danger because of their sins he seemed to them as one that mocked. His influence with his own children was gone, and the people of the city spoke contemptuously of him. Everybody despised him."

"He did indeed get into the net, sure enough," said Mary, as she

heard this sketch of Lot's history. "How could he enjoy such a life after being so long with Abram?"

"He did not enjoy it. See what is said of him in 11 Peter ii, 8," said Grandpa.

Carrie took the Bible this time and read as follows: "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds."

"He was a big goose to stay in such a place and be vexed every day. I'd have moved," said Charley.

"Why he did not move we can only imagine," answered Grandpa. "He was probably making money and living in luxury—so he stayed, right or wrong, happy or unhappy. Better far is it not to enter the net at all, not to go near that which is wrong. Keep away off from it, as a careful driver keeps from the edge of a precipice. Do not enter the outer circles of a whirlpool, then the centre of it will never swallow you."

"May I add a quotation from Solomon?" said Mrs. Reed. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

"What about *my daughter*, if sinners entice thee?" asked Charley, laughing.

"Solomon knew the daughters would be all right," answered Mary, as the party broke up in a merry mood.

HOME FROM THE FIGHT; OR, ROYAL HONORS FOR VICTORS.

TELL us about Abram and Lot, Grandpa. I want to know more of what happened to them," said Carrie on the next assembling of the family in the sitting-room.

"How do you suppose," asked Grandpa in reply, "that Abram treated Lot after they separated?"

"I know how I would have treated him," said Mary. "I would have let him totally alone; I would never have spoken to him again; I would never have cared to see him. He was too mean for anything."

"So would I—only worse," exclaimed Charley.

"Well, we will see what Abram did," replied Grandpa. "Sodom and the cities about it were subject to a great King known as the King of Elam. But they rebelled against him, and would not pay him any more money for taxes. So this King and three others came one day and attacked the cities of the plain. They made short work of the soldiers who came out to fight them. Then they stole all the valuables they could find and carried off Lot and many other people as prisoners."

"Served Lot right," exclaimed Charley; "he had no business to live there."

"By and by Abram heard what had happened to Lot. What do you suppose he then did? He did not say, Served him right, nor, It's none of my business. Oh! no; he gathered together his own men who could serve as soldiers and other men who were his friends, three hundred and eighteen in all, and away he went in pursuit of the vic-

torious King of Elam. After a chase of about a hundred miles, he overtook and beat him completely and took back the prisoners and all the stolen goods. So Abram saved Lot and recovered all the treasures of those cities of the plain."



"And Melchizedek King of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."—Genesis xiv, 18.

"He was just grand!" exclaimed Mary, who was an ardent hero-worshiper.

"I wish I had seen that fight," said Charley. "It would have been splendid fun to see those fellows chased over the hills, dropping all the nice things as they ran."

"When the fight was over and Abram's men had rested, he began his march home, and everybody on the way was anxious to do him honor. The King of Sodom, who had escaped capture at the time of the battle, went out a long way to meet Abram and his men; and well he might. They had done a great thing for him. Another great King named Melchizedek came out to meet them also. He was King of Salem. He was so noble and good and so honorable a priest of God that the Lord Jesus Himself is called, a priest after the order of Melchizedek. This King brought out food and drink for the soldiers, and in the name of God pronounced blessings on Abram. So as they came home from the fight royal honors were bestowed upon them everywhere, and it must have been a happy day for them all. Melchizedek's men brought jars of wine and baskets of bread, and Abram's men brought the treasures they had recaptured, a tenth of which he gave to Melchizedek to be used in the service of God."

"What was Lot doing all this time?" asked Carrie.

"Standing around, I suppose," said Grandpa. "He probably picked up the sword of some dead man, so that he too might look like a soldier now that danger was over. But he must have been very glad to be free again, and must have realized how good and grand his dear old uncle was. The King of Sodom was so grateful that he urged Abram to keep all the recaptured treasures for himself. But Abram was too independent for that; he would not take a thread or a shoestring. He did his part from a generous and noble heart, and he was generous and noble to the end."

"That's so," shouted Charley. "They ought to have made him President, so they ought."

Laughing heartily at Charley's republican honors for the old patriarch, the little company separated, each thinking of Mrs. Reed's good-night text, which she read from Matthew v, 44, 45: "Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

LESSONS FROM THE STARS;

OR, A GRAND FUTURE FORETOLD.

"LET us go out to the porch," said Grandpa, as the family rose from the supper table. "It is a clear night and we will enjoy looking at the stars."

This request seemed a little odd; but nobody questioned it, and in a moment all were looking heavenward upon stars which seemed especially bright in the dark-blue heavens.

"Let us count them," said Grandpa, after a moment's silent looking.

"Count them!" said Mary. "That's more than any of us can do."

With this all agreed; so Grandpa proposed that, as they could not count the stars, they should go again to the sitting-room. Wondering at his unusual conduct, they re-entered the house, and when all were seated, Grandpa began: "One night Abram and the Lord had been talking together very lovingly, and Abram opened his heart on a matter that puzzled him. It had been promised that he should have many descendants, who should become a great people. But the fact was that Abram had no child at all. How that promise was to be fulfilled Abram did not see; so he made free to ask the Lord about it. Then the Lord led Abram out of the house. It was a clear, bright night, and God said, Look, now, toward heaven and count the stars. Could Abram do any better at this than we did a few minutes ago? The skies of Palestine are very clear and more stars are visible there than here. We could not fairly begin to count the stars we saw. Could Abram have done any better?"

"Why, no," said all at once.

"Just so; and when Abram gave up his effort to count, then God said, So shall thy seed be."

"Wasn't that a beautiful way for God to teach Abram?" said Mary.

"Yes; and Abram believed it just as God said it. This pleased God all the more, and He went on to assure Abram that he should



"And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."—Genesis xv, 5.

possess all that land. He also foretold many important things about Abram's descendants, and finally told Abram that he should end his days in peace and be buried at a good old age."

"That was lovely, wasn't it?" said Carrie, who had made Abram's

affairs her special delight. "But, Grandpa, what great nation is it that descended from Abram?"

"The Jews—or Israelites, as they prefer to be called; a people that has held together from Abram's time till now, though it has suffered more persecution and harsh treatment than any other nation of the world."

"Why, I don't think the Jews are so many that they can't be numbered," said Mary. "My geography gives their number as six hundred thousand, while some nations have eight or ten times as many."

"True; but the Jews have been a people continuously for nearly four thousand years. Who can tell how many of them have lived in all that time? And remember one other thing: Abram's seed, or descendants, are not those who bear the name of Israel only. Real servants of God—those who love Him from the heart—are the true Israelites, the true children of Abram; for see what Paul says in Galatians iii, 29."

Carrie found the verse and read as follows: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

"Oh! I understand," exclaimed Mary. "Abram was so very good that all good people are called his children."

"Yes," added Grandpa; "and when we feel discouraged at the great number of evil people in the world, we need only to look to the stars, as Abram did. We may be sure that those who love and serve God can no more be counted than can the stars."

"That is a grand encouragement," said Mrs. Reed. "It reminds me of those splendid words of the hymn:

" 'Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright—
The armies of the ransomed,
Throng up the steeps of light.' "

"And that," said Grandpa, "is but the echo of those Bible descriptions of the occupants of heaven as an innumerable company, a multitude which no man could number in that throng."

FAMILY TROUBLES; OR, THE SERPENT IN THE HOME.

“**W**HAT would you think if I should tell you a story that would make you feel displeased with Abram?” asked Grandpa Goodwin, as the children gathered about him.

“I should be very sorry,” said Mary, “for I think Abram was just splendid.”

“So should I be sorry,” chimed in Carrie, “for he is so nice.”

“Tell us the story, Grandpa,” urged Charley; “I guess we can stand it.”

“Well,” began Grandpa, “I suppose we may talk over this story, since God for some good reason has allowed it to go into the Bible. Abram’s wife had a servant-maid named Hagar. She was dutiful and well-behaved, and Sarai at last urged Abram to marry this maid and have two wives. It was an odd thing for her to urge, but she did it, and Abram yielded and married Hagar. It was quite common in those days for men to have several wives, though the Bible never approves such conduct. This second marriage soon brought trouble into Abram’s family. It let Satan, the old serpent, right into his home.”

“I should think it would,” said Mary; “but Sarai was very foolish to ask Abram to do such a thing.”

“And he very foolish to do it,” continued Grandpa, “for no sooner was Hagar recognized as his wife than her head was turned by her new honors, and she despised the very woman whose influence had made her what she was. Then Sarai became jealous and ran to Abram with sore complaints against Hagar. Abram hardly did

right by Hagar either, for he said to Sarai, Do to her as it pleaseth thee. Now Sarai was pleased to abuse Hagar, and abuse her she did, until in sheer desperation Hagar ran off into the woods away from Abram and his people."

"That was a shame!" exclaimed Mary, indignantly; "but I blame Sarai most. She was real ugly, and had no business to treat Hagar so."

"What happened to Hagar out in the woods?" asked Charley. "Did Indians get after her?"

"No, Charley. There were no Indians there; but an angel of the Lord got after her, and that was a great deal better."

"What did he say?" asked the boy, who anticipated some great adventure of this lone woman in the woods.

"The angel found her sitting by a well of water, where she had stopped for rest and drink. On his asking where she was going, she told him all about her troubles. Then he told her to go back, be patient, and all would come out well, because the Lord had heard her cry and would care for her. Then Hagar said, Thou God seest me; and trusting this fact and saying these words over and over in her heart, she went back to her home, and for several years after this we hear of no more trouble."

"That was real kind of the angel," said Carrie; "but then angels are always kind, aren't they, Grandpa?"

"Yes, darling; it is their business to minister to the children of God?"

"What happened after that?" inquired Charley, feeling that the story had not yet topped out just as he had anticipated.

"Years ran on, and a son of Hagar's had become a large, strong lad. His name was Ishmael. Sarai, too, had a son, named Isaac. One day Sarai gave a great party in honor of her boy, and in the midst of the enjoyment what did she see but Ishmael making faces at Isaac and mocking him. She was very angry at this, and demanded that Ishmael be sent away from the house at once, and his mother

with him. That boy and her boy should not live together. One or the other must go. That was an awful trial for dear, kind Abram. What could he do?"

"Let Sarai clear out herself and take Ike along," answered Charley, with promptness and decision.



"And she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba."—Genesis xxi, 14.

"I'm not so sure about that," said Mary; "but Hagar was not to blame. Boys will be boys; and I suppose Ishmael was full of fun and didn't mean any harm. He wouldn't have hurt little Isaac, I'm sure. Sarai needn't have become so cross about it."

"I don't like her, any way," said Carrie. "She was an old mischief-maker—that's what she was."

"I don't suppose Abram was very clear as to what was best in the case," continued Grandpa; "but he went to God with his trouble, and God told him to do what Sarai asked and He would make it all right for Hagar. So, early the next morning, Abram sent Hagar off, giving her food and water, and Sarai, no doubt, rejoiced to be rid of her and her saucy boy. It was a terrible trouble in a family, and none but God could in any way lighten it."

"It must have been all right, for God approved it. But it don't seem so; does it, Grandpa?"

"No, Mary; it does not seem right. It was grievous to Abram, and I am sure it was terrible to Hagar and Ishmael. But God undertook to bring good out of it, though it seemed so full of evil."

"What did He do? I'm sure I don't see what could be done," added Carrie.

"Hagar and the boy started and journeyed on in the wilderness until their provisions were gone and they were thoroughly tired. So faint did Ishmael become that Hagar laid him in a shady place under the bushes, supposing he was about to die. She could not bear to sit there and see his agony; so she went off a little way and wept aloud, while the boy, too, sobbed and moaned in his sufferings. Then she heard a kind voice asking, What aileth thee, Hagar? what aileth thee, Hagar? It was God's voice, and He assured her that the lad should be saved and should become the head of a great nation. Looking up, as she heard this good news, she saw a well near by. It took her but a moment to fill her pitcher, give the sick boy a drink, and bathe his hot head. Soon he was much better, and he lived, grew, became a famous hunter, and at last married a woman of Egypt, which was his mother's native land."

"And is that all we know about him?" asked Charley.

"We know," answered Grandpa, "that many years after, when his father died, Ishmael and Isaac met in sorrow and buried him. We

know, also, that Ishmael became very great and that his descendants, the Ishmaelites, were a brave and strong people, so that the outcast boy had no reason to grieve in the end. The Arabs, probably, are descended from him, and through him they claim Abram as their father. They believe that Ishmael was offered in sacrifice by his father, on a mountain near their sacred city, Mecca. When Mohammedan pilgrims go to that city they visit this mount in honor of Ishmael. If they desire to make a perfect pilgrimage, they also listen to a sermon at this place and offer a sacrifice of their own. Ishmael's burial-place is pointed out near Mecca, and the claim is made that Abraham once visited him in this city and helped him rebuild its temple, which had been destroyed by a flood. Ishmael lived to be one hundred and thirty-seven years old and to become very famous."

"This is far better than I expected," said Mary; "but God, not Sarai or Abram, made it come out so well."

"God's hands are good hands in which to leave our affairs," said Mrs. Reed. "As the Psalmist says, Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

"That's what I'll do," added Charley. "He did so well for Ishmael I'll let Him try me."

"If you really do, Charley," said his mother, "I'm sure He'll make a good job of it; so I hope you'll let Him try."

"About one hundred and twenty years ago," added Grandpa, "Michael Bruce, a Scottish poet, died, being only twenty-one years of age. Among many beautiful verses he left are these:

"How happy is the child who hears
Instruction's warning voice,
And who celestial wisdom makes
His early, only choice.

"For she has treasures greater far
Than east or west unfold,
And her rewards more precious are
Than all their stores of gold."

THREE WONDERFUL GUESTS:

OR, ENTERTAINING ANGELS UNAWARES.

"**C**ARRIE, turn to Hebrews xiii and read the first two verses," said Grandpa.

Carrie turned as told and read these words: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

"What is unawares?" asked Charley.

"Unawares," repeated Mary; "why, unawares means without thinking. They entertained angels without supposing them to be angels."

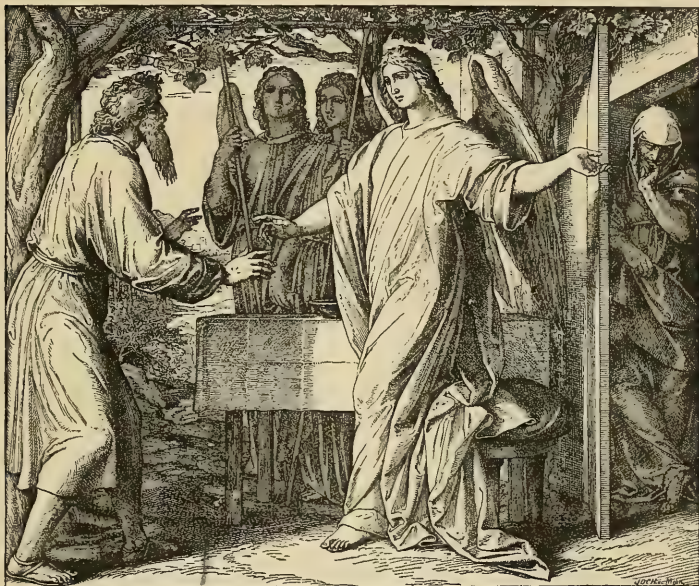
"Can either of you tell of a person who once entertained strangers without suspecting them to be angels, but who afterward found them to be really such?" asked Grandpa.

Nobody answered; so Grandpa went on: "One very warm day Abram—whose name God had lately changed to Abraham—was sitting at his tent-door, resting and cooling himself, when suddenly three men appeared. He hastened forward to meet them and bowed most politely. They were entire strangers to him, but he offered to entertain them, and they consented to stop. So Abraham had water brought for them to wash, and while they rested under a tree near by, he had meat and cakes cooked; then the table was set in a shady place, and while the strangers ate, Abraham stood by to see that all their wants were supplied."

"Who were these men?" asked Carrie, whose curiosity was rising with the story.

"Abraham did not know, nor did he ask. No doubt he wondered,

but he was too gentlemanly to question them. Maybe he suspected whom they were, but he kept still and served them as best he knew how. The fact is that one of them was the Lord Himself, who afterward was known as Jesus; the others were angels who went with



"He took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."—Genesis xviii, 8.

Him to do His bidding. Abraham did not know these facts, however. He entertained the angels unawares."

"It was Abraham, then, that Carrie read about!" exclaimed Mary. "I see now. I can answer that question the next time you ask it, I'm sure. But why did God change his name from Abram to Abra-

ham. I don't see much difference between them. I prefer *Abram*; it's shorter, and don't seem so old-fashioned."

"There is a difference, though; and God made the change to honor this loved servant of His. *Abram* means a high or noble father; but such a father might have no more than one son. *Abraham*, however, means the father of a great multitude. God made this change because, though Abraham had no child, yet he was to have many descendants and be widely honored. Sarai's name, too, had been changed to Sarah. *Sarai* probably meant *contentious* or quarrelsome—a name that seems well applied in her earlier life. *Sarah* means *princess*, and well describes the honor into which she was brought at the end as the mother of many nations."

"What did the angels do at Abraham's?" asked Charley, seeming not to enjoy the digression about the change of names.

"After some cheery words to Abraham and Sarah, they started on their way, Abraham going with them to see them safely started. They took the road toward Sodom, and as they went their conversation made Abraham sure they were not mere men, but real messengers of God. They were going to Sodom and Gomorrah to see whether there was anything good in those cities. If not, they meant to destroy them. This they told to Abraham, knowing him to be a true friend of God's. When they came to the brow of the hill the angels passed on, but the Lord remained with Abraham. Then Abraham began to plead that Sodom might be spared. He thought of Lot and his family and was anxious to save them. The Lord promised to spare Sodom if fifty righteous persons should be found there; then, on Abraham's further pleading, He agreed to spare the city if forty-five righteous persons should be found there; then if forty; then if thirty; then if twenty; then if ten. Having made this promise, the Lord left and Abraham went back to his tent."

"How large were those cities, Grandpa?—as large as New York or Chicago?"

"By no means, Mary. Sodom was the chief of them and was the

seat of the local government, but at most it had only a few thousand inhabitants. Its residents were chiefly shepherds or small farmers, having plenty of idle time on their hands and having no great ambitions to excel in any way. Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, you know, and these idlers became very low and vile."

"It was a mean city to live in; and a mean set of people," said Charley, very positively. "I'll bet there were a sneaking set of boys in that old town. I'm glad it wasn't my home."

"How did Abraham feel, I wonder, after being in such company and having such talk?" was Carrie's half-questioning meditation, as Grandpa paused.

"I am sure he felt honored by having entertained such guests and having had an interview with the Lord Himself. But he felt awfully concerned for Lot. It may be Abraham blamed himself more or less for having brought Lot from his early home in Chaldea into this land; but, whether he did or not, Lot was in terrible danger. Abraham had done all he could to save him; but would he be saved? This was uncertain. The chances were sadly against him. It looked as though all was gone."

"Well, was he saved?" exclaimed the children.

"Of that we shall talk to-morrow evening. Meanwhile you will do well to remember what we read at the beginning this evening about entertaining strangers."

"And let me remind the children also," added Mrs. Reed, "that on one occasion two hospitable men entertained a stranger who proved to be even greater than angels."

"Where was that, mamma, and whom did they entertain?" asked Carrie.

"Read the last chapter of Luke, and see for yourself."

"Oh! I know," exclaimed Mary. "It was the disciples at Emmaus who entertained the Lord."

"Yes, darling, you are right."

EVERYTHING DESTROYED; OR, FLEEING FROM THE BURNING CITY.

“WHAT became of Lot?” asked Charley, before the family had time to be fairly seated. “I haven’t thought of anything else to-day but of those angels going to Sodom, and I’ve been wondering whether Lot got off.”

“When the two angels reached the gate of Sodom,” began Grandpa, “the first man to meet them was Lot. He was sitting at the gate, and as he saw them come near, he went forward and saluted them in friendly style and asked them to come and lodge with him. After a little urging they consented, and Lot took them home to supper, little thinking that he was entertaining angels.”

“I wish some of them would come to our house,” added Charley. “I’d give them my bed to sleep in, I would.”

“Lot felt that way too, Charley,” resumed Grandpa; “but before they had time to go to bed a mob of low, vile fellows, whose conduct had given Sodom so bad a name, gathered about Lot’s door and wanted to see his guests, really meaning to do them harm. Lot went out to talk to the men and quiet them, but the miserable fellows turned on him, mocking him and attempting to beat him. Then the angels interfered. Opening the door they jerked Lot away from the mob and caused a sudden blindness to fall upon the men, who groped around for the door, howling at Lot and his guests and struggling with each other until completely wearied out, when they gave up their effort and scattered to their homes.”

“I guess Lot thought he had angels about him when they pulled him in. It was lucky for him they were there,” said Mary.

"They'd have killed Lot but for the angels," added Carrie.

"After this affair the angels did not debate long as to what was to be done with Sodom. They sent Lot off to the houses of his married daughters to warn them to flee before the city should be destroyed.



"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."—Genesis, xix, 17.

But alas! Lot had not talked that way before, nor lived that way. He had said nothing about danger because of sin. He had acted as if Sodom was the best place he knew, and he had stayed there to make money. To his sons-in-law he seemed as one that mocked when he suddenly became concerned for their safety; they would not

go, nor would their wives. So Lot went back home alone, while the young folks probably laughed at their father's excitement and went off to their beds. As day began to dawn the angels urged Lot with his wife and two unmarried daughters to rise and fly lest they should be consumed; but they were not in a hurry. No alarm of fire had been sounded; they saw no token of danger—so they lingered until the angels seized them by their hands and hurried them away outside the city's gate, telling them to hasten and escape for their lives; not to look back nor to stop in all the plain, but to flee to the mountains, lest they should be consumed with the city."

"I suppose they hurried fast enough then. I'm sure I would have done so had I been there."

"It would seem so indeed, Mary, but it was not so. Lot did not want to go to the mountains, so he begged permission to go to Zoar, another little city. For Lot's sake Zoar was spared, and the angels hurried him toward it. Lot's wife did not want to go at all. She had been told not even to look back, but back she did look, and instantly she was changed into a pillar of salt. Just how this was done we do not know, but she disobeyed, and for that she was destroyed. Lot and his daughters then hurried on, frightened, out of breath, and stripped of all their goods except what they carried in their hands. No sooner had they reached Zoar than fire and brimstone rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah, burning up everything, and totally destroying the cities, the surrounding country, the cattle, and all the people."

"Did Abraham know the city was burned up?" asked Carrie, with evident concern.

"Doubtless he did," responded Grandpa. "I do not suppose he slept much that night after the Lord left him. At any rate, Genesis xix, 27, says that he went up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord, and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and lo! the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. He then found out for a certainty that ten righteous persons had not

been discovered in Sodom, but whether Lot had been destroyed he did not know."

"What became of Lot and his daughters?" asked Mary.

"His was a sad end. He lost all his property in the fire; his married daughters and their husbands were burned up; his wife was turned into a pillar of salt on their way to Zoar; and he, with his two daughters, reached there weary, bereaved, destitute, and terror-stricken. But they were not contented. For some reason he feared to dwell in the city. Perhaps he feared another fiery shower; perhaps the people were unfriendly and abusive. But he was afraid to stay—so he and his daughters went off to the mountains, as they were ordered to do at the first, and made their home in a cave."

"Oh! my," exclaimed Carrie; "just to think of it! and he was once so rich! How awfully his daughters must have felt to become so poor and live in a cave!"

"Why didn't he go back to Abraham?" asked Charley. "Rich uncles are always nice to go to."

"He would have been ashamed to do that," said Mary.

"I judge he was," replied Grandpa, "for we have no account that he ever did go back, but he continued to live in the cave. His daughters, dissatisfied with everything about them, acted very badly for a time, and then they drop out of the Bible narrative and we hear no more about them."

"Don't you know what became of Lot?"

"No, Charley; his is one of those cases which end in darkness. After his changeful life it is to be hoped he found the eternal rest, but no man knows how it fared with him."

"That is a sad ending to the story," said Mary, very seriously; Mrs. Reed adding the words from Paul, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

A TIMELY RESCUE; OR, THE CHILD OF PROMISE SAVED.

"I HAVE been thinking so much about Lot and the trouble he must have been to his good uncle," began Mary, as the family gathered once more for their after-tea chat. "I think Abraham must have become sorry that ever he saw Lot."

"Rather, that ever he brought Lot into Canaan," interrupted Grandpa, "for there is where the trouble began. God told Abraham to leave his father's house and his kindred; but Abraham took some of his kindred along—this nephew, Lot, among them—and he became a constant trouble. I suppose Abraham loved Lot and was unwilling to leave him behind. But Abraham outgrew that love of men in preference to God; he came at last to where he would obey God if he had to kill his own son in doing so."

"Oh! yes," exclaimed Carrie. "He came near killing Isaac, didn't he, Grandpa? But it was queer of the Lord to tell Abraham to do such a thing, wasn't it?"

"Not so queer, possibly, as my little girl supposes. You see that Abraham, because of love to his father and nephew, had not done just as God told him. He loved them more than he loved God. But by the trouble they caused him he learned that it is better to obey God at any cost than to please one's self. That Abraham had really learned this hard lesson, and that he would obey God in anything, God now meant to prove."

"Why should God do that?" asked Mary. "Did not He know that Abraham would obey?"

"Yes; but Abraham did not know it for himself until God tested

him, and the world would never have known it without this trial. God meant the test to be a hard one. Read to us, Mary, from Genesis xxii, 2, and see just what God did demand?"

In a moment Mary had found the place and read: "And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

"That was an awfully hard thing to ask," said Carrie. "But Abraham knew God didn't mean for him to do it; didn't he, Grandpa?"

"Certainly not. Abraham was in solemn earnest. He meant to do all God commanded this time. That he expected to kill Isaac is clear from Hebrews xi, 19, which tells us he did it, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead. So he expected Isaac to go among the dead—to *die*, in other words—and he believed that God would bring him back to life at some time and in some way, so that God's promises concerning Isaac might be fulfilled. God put His command in a very hard form: Take thy *son*, thine *only* son, *Isaac*, whom thou *lovest*, and offer him for a *burnt-offering*. God meant to make Abraham see all the terribly hard things in this act of obedience; and he was to obey at once, for God said, Take *now* thy son and offer him. So Abraham was to kill his dear boy, drain the blood from his body, and then burn it; for in this way the burnt-offering was made."

"That was a dreadful thing to ask of a father," said Carrie, with a shudder.

"I wouldn't have done it if it had been me."

"That's where you and Abraham differ, then, Charley," said Grandpa, with a smile; "for he rose early the next morning and started. There was no disobedience this time; he now meant to do just what God had ordered. It was a two days' journey; but they went, with wood split and knife sharpened, until they came to the appointed spot. What they talked about on the way is not told, except that Isaac said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering? This question shows that the boy

did not know his father's errand. His inquiry must have cut Abraham to the heart. He could not control himself so as to tell all, but he answered, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering. So they came to the place of sacrifice, where they rolled



"And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham."—Genesis xxii, 10, 11.

together some great stones for an altar, on which they arranged the wood so that it would burn freely. Then came the fearful moment. It must be done. God had said it. Abraham will obey. He tied Isaac's hands, laid him on the altar, took the knife, stretched forth his own hand to strike the blow and kill the boy; but, as he paused

a moment, probably in prayer, a voice rang out, loud and clear: Abraham! Abraham! Here am I, said he; here in the place to which God sent me; here, doing the work God ordered; here, ready to know and to do His will, though my heart aches and breaks."

"Well, I never understood how good and grand Abraham was in that. I couldn't help thinking he was very cruel; but now he seems to be just right," said Mary.

"So God thought; for read what the angel who had called him says in verse 12."

Mary read: "And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

"How glad Abraham must have felt at that! I guess he said, Thank you, in real earnest," said Carrie.

"I guess it didn't take him long to untie Ike, upset the old altar, and start back home," added Charley, with a glow of enthusiasm.

"So far as upsetting the altar is concerned, that they did not do. Abraham at that moment saw a ram caught in the bushes by his horns; so he took the ram and offered him instead of Isaac for a burnt-offering unto the Lord. Then God spoke again, repeating the old promises and giving Abraham some new ones, also, because he had obeyed so nobly."

"He deserved it, too. Nobody could have had a harder trial, and nobody could have met it more splendidly."

"You are right, Mary," added Grandpa. "After this they started home—a happy couple, I am sure."

"Which of you," joined in Mrs. Reed at this point, "can tell me of another Father who really did offer as a sacrifice *His Son*, His *only Son*, and One whom He *dearly loved*?"

None of the children answering, she turned over the leaves of the Bible to John iii, 16, and read: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

A QUEER COURTSHIP;

OR, WHY SUPPER WAS DELAYED.

"WHAT a good time Isaac must have had with the boys after he got home again," said Charley, when the family met once more. "If my father had most killed me and I had got off all right, I'd have had something to tell them, I know."

"I trust the boys did enjoy listening to him, and that he enjoyed telling them," said Grandpa, "for the story ought to have made better boys of them. But there was another scene in Isaac's life, which possibly may interest the girls more than the boys."

"O Grandpa! do tell us," shouted both girls at once, Mary adding the declaration that she was "dying to hear it,"

"It is about a queer courtship, or the way Isaac got his wife."

"Splendid!" exclaimed Mary. "Do go on. I'm dying more than ever to hear about it now."

"Well," resumed Grandpa, "Isaac's mother died and left him a well-grown lad, some forty years of age."

"A venerable old bachelor, I should say," laughed Mary.

"But boys did not grow up so fast then," continued Grandpa. "Isaac was probably gaining some young lady acquaintances among the neighbors, who really worshiped idols and were very wicked people. Abraham did not like the idea of his son marrying one of these women, so he called his head servant and sent him to the land called Mesopotamia, where Abraham himself had been born, that he might there find a wife for Isaac."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Charley. "That old chap of a servant was to do the courting, was he?"

"So it seems, Charley, and Abraham gave him plenty of camels and servants, with gold, silver, precious stones, rich robes, and other costly and elegant things, and then made the servant take a solemn oath to do all he had been told, and so started him on his long and very odd errand."



"And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord."—Genesis xxiv, 17, 18.

"Why was he so sure that any nice girl would come so far to marry a man she had never seen?" asked Carrie, adding, seriously, "I wouldn't do it, I know."

"Oh! that was the way of doing then," said Grandpa, "and they do pretty much that way even now in those lands."

"Glad I don't live there!" exclaimed Mary.

"So am I glad you don't live there," said Grandpa, "for then we could not have our pleasant evening talks. But the old servant started, and after a long, long journey of many days, he came to a city called Nahor, after Abraham's own brother, whose descendants were settled all around that place. Here he had been told to seek a wife for Isaac. And how do you suppose he began?"

"Why, by asking questions about the nice young girls of the place, of course," said Mary.

"No, not a question did he ask. Just outside the city was a well, and the women were accustomed to come there in the cool of the day for water. There the old servant's caravan stopped; and having prayed that God would guide him, he decided that when the women came to the well he would ask for a drink from their pitchers. If any one of them gave him a drink and also offered to fill the water troughs so that the camels might drink, he would take that as a sure sign that she was the one for Isaac. It was a strange thing for him to expect any young woman to offer to do, for camels drink enormously, and to draw water for a herd of them was a tremendous task."

"It was a pretty good test though, for anybody obliging enough to do that would be good and kind, I'm sure," said Mary.

"Yes, that is so. The old servant had not long to wait, for directly some of the women came, and he asked for a drink. Then one bright, pretty girl at once lowered her pitcher from her shoulder on to her hand that he might drink from it, and she also offered to draw water for the camels. So surprised was the good old man that he let her go on drawing water until the camels were satisfied. Then he gave her a splendid gold ear-ring and two beautiful bracelets, and asked her whose daughter she was, and whether her father could keep him for the night. She told who she was—a grand-

daughter of Abraham's brother—and then she ran home to tell of the strangers who were coming. Possibly the rich gifts she had received helped the welcome, but sure it is that her brother Laban ran out to the well and urged the strangers to come right along, as everything was ready for them and their beasts. The camels were quickly



"What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?"—Genesis xxiv, 64.

unladen and fed, and supper was soon ready for the old servant. 'But,' said he, 'I will not eat until I have told mine errand.' So he kept supper waiting while he told who he was, why he came, and what had happened at the well. When he was through they all agreed that

the matter was from the Lord. Then the old servant handed out a splendid lot of presents to each of the family, after which they took supper and spent a happy evening together."

"And was she really engaged to Isaac so quick as that, and she had never seen him?" asked Mary, with astonishment.

"Even so. Rebekah (for that was her name) was willing, and who was more concerned than she? Early next morning the old servant wanted to be right off to Isaac. The family very naturally wanted him to stay a few days, but he was urgent and Rebekah agreed, so off they started for Isaac's home in Canaan. Her old nurse, Deborah, went with her, as did her servant maids, and so, mounted on camels and escorted by Abraham's men, the bridal party began its march to the far-off, and to them, unknown land."

"That was a queer performance," said Carrie. "And what was Isaac doing all this time?"

"He was anxious and impatient, I am sure, for he moved up toward the north a little to meet the caravan as it should be returning. One evening, as we are told in Genesis xxiv, 63, 'he went out to meditate in the field.' He went in the direction which the old servant would naturally take in returning, and as Isaac looked, 'behold! the camels were coming.' At the same moment Rebekah saw him and asked who he was. Then she drew a veil over her face, got down off her camel, and in another moment Isaac, her future husband, was at her side."

"Suppose they had not liked each other, wouldn't it have been awful?" said Carrie.

"But they did like each other. Isaac loved her, and she was a comfort to him, and she went to live in his mother's splendid tent, and Abraham was glad that Isaac had found so good a wife in so odd a way."

"That is a nice story," said Carrie. "I shall certainly tell it to all the girls in school to-morrow."



REBEKAH AT THE WELL.

SHARP PRACTICE; OR, DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

"**H**OW did Isaac and his wife get along after that queer courtship?" asked Carrie, when Grandpa was seated with the family.

"Very well in their young days, so far as we know. He loved her and she was a comfort to him, which is a good record for a man and his wife. But things were not smooth and happy as they became older, I am sorry to say."

"Why, what happened to them then?" asked Mary. "It seemed to me they were just a splendid couple. They should have lived in comfort to the end of their days."

"Trouble came in this way. After they had been married a good many years they had twin boys, whom they called Esau and Jacob. Even as babies these boys were very unlike each other. Esau was red-haired, and had plenty of it too, so that his hands and arms were like a hairy garment. He grew up to be a great hunter, living out-of-doors in a bold, roving way. Jacob was smooth-skinned and of quiet manners, staying about in the house and enjoying his mother's society."

"He was a mother's boy," said Charley, with something of contempt in his manner; but catching himself in an instant, he added "But if his mother was like my mother, I don't blame him a bit."

"Jacob became his mother's favorite," continued Grandpa, "while Esau was a pet of his father's, chiefly because he captured so much fine game, of which his father was very fond. So the father favored and petted one son and the mother favored and petted the other."

In this way trouble is sure to come. Neither boy was slow to see with which parent he could best get along, so Esau ran to father and Jacob to mother with their complaints or requests. Soon things in that home became unpleasant. Trickery, deceit, falsehood, and favoritism grew fast. The family was divided into two parts, each planning against the other, each using sharp practice to outwit the other. It was diamond cut diamond, as the common phrase puts it; trust and comfort departed."

"I'm sorry to know that," sighed Carrie. "I thought Rebekah was so good. I didn't think she could do an ugly thing."

"But she did, Carrie. Like ourselves, she was only human, and liable to do wrong."

"What wrong did she do, Grandpa? I want to know all about it, and yet I don't want to know; but tell me, what was it she did?"

"Well, my dear," resumed Grandpa, "it was the custom in that land for the elder son of a family to receive twice as much of his father's property as any other son."

"That's the kind of a son I am, the elder son," said Charley, between Grandpa's sentences.

"The father generally gave a special blessing to this son, so that he became rich in property and in his father's good-will also. Of right this honor belonged to Esau, but Jacob envied it, and he and his mother talked and schemed to get it. One day Jacob had a splendid mess of beans just smoking hot from the fire. As he was about to eat this savory food, in came Esau from a hunting trip, and he was both tired and hungry. He asked Jacob for the dish of beans he was about to eat, and Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. That was a big price for a mess of beans; but Esau was a tired, hungry boy, and he thought he was about to die any way for the want of food, so he said to himself, What profit shall this birthright do to me? He thought his last hour had come unless he should get food at once, so he sold his birthright, and by a solemn oath turned it over to Jacob."

"The foolish fellow!" exclaimed the girls.

"Why didn't he go into the kitchen and get something for himself?" asked Charley, certain that he could have managed things far better than Esau did.

"The fact is," said Grandpa, "that Esau cared very little for the honor and privilege that were his. He *despised his birthright*, as we are told in Genesis xxv, 34, and having eaten his fill, he rose up and went his way without regret for having parted with it. Whether his father knew that Esau had sold the birthright we do not know, but he loved Esau and the venison Esau brought him, and he decided to give him the blessing, right or wrong. One day he told Esau that the time had come that he should have it, but he demanded that Esau should go and kill some venison and dress it; then, after eating it, the blessing would in due form be given. If Esau had been true to his bargain made with Jacob, he would have told all about it then, but he said nothing and hurried off to kill the deer and feed his father. So he tried his sharp practice in the case."

"Well, I don't like him for that," said Mary. "He sold out to Jacob and swore that he would stand by his bargain; so he ought to have done it."

"That would have been honorable," replied Grandpa; "but Rebekah was sharp too. It was diamond cut diamond. So she hurriedly cooked some goat's meat, seasoned it as Isaac liked to have venison seasoned, then hunted up some of Esau's old clothes and put them on her pet boy. His hands and neck she covered with goatskin and so sent him to his father, who was blind, that he might get the blessing ahead of Esau."

"That was mean; I don't like her either," was Mary's emphatic comment.

"Mothers will do anything for boys," said Charley, looking roguishly at his mother and sisters.

"Mothers ought never to do a wrong thing for either boys or girls," replied Grandpa, "but Rebekah did it. She sent her boy to deceive

his blind father, and she planned and helped the deception from first to last. When all was ready, Jacob went in, carrying the goat's meat to his father, who was surprised that Esau should be back so soon. So he asked, Who art thou, my son? That was a hard question for



"It came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob . . . that Esau his brother came in from his hunting."—Genesis xxvii, 30.

Jacob to meet, but he met it with a lie, saying, I am Esau, thy first-born. The blind old man was suspicious that all was not right, and wanted to feel his hands. When he felt the rough goatskin and the clothes and smelt the odor of the garments, he was satisfied, though he said the voice was Jacob's. Once more he asked, Art thou my

very son Esau? And Jacob said, I am. Then Isaac blessed him, kissed him, ate the food, and was content. But hardly was this done when in came Esau. Then there was a scene. Esau cried aloud and begged for a blessing, while the old father trembled all over and knew not what to do. At last he said, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed. Then Esau begged piteously for some other blessing, and his father gave him one full of comfort, and yet Jacob was to be chief. He and his mother had gained the prize. The blessing of the firstborn was his."

"But, Grandpa, I don't see why the firstborn should be any better than any other child," said Mary. "I don't think I'm so great just because I was born before Carrie and Charley."

"Good girl!" shouted Charley; "but you're our *big* sister all the same."

"You know, Mary, that the King, in countries so ruled, is always the firstborn son, or his firstborn son, and so, not by second sons, but by the first in each family, the titles and honors are handed down. It was so in Jacob's time. Then, too, he who is the head of the family, its prince or chieftain among the patriarchs, needed more property to maintain his larger establishment; so the firstborn needed to be the most liberally provided for."

"I'll bet Esau was mad at Jacob," said Charley.

"Yes, I suppose he was," continued Grandpa. "It is said that he hated Jacob because of this trick, and vowed to kill him when their father should die. In this way a sad, sad home was made."

"I'm real sorry," said Carrie; "but they all did wrong, didn't they?"

"Yes," interposed Mrs. Reed, "and let us learn to keep our home happy by always doing right."

"We'll try," was the answer all gave with real earnestness.

THE WONDERFUL LADDER; OR, A STAIRWAY TO THE SKIES.

"WHAT happened to Jacob after he got that birthright?" asked Charley before Grandpa had fairly settled himself in his easy-chair. "Did Esau hurt him? I've been wondering all day how their quarrel came out."

"No; Esau did not harm him," replied Grandpa. "But Jacob's mother was afraid harm would come to her pet boy; so she made an excuse to send him away to her father's until Esau's anger should cool off. She told Isaac that she feared Jacob would marry a young woman of the land where they were dwelling, and this she thought would never do, so she proposed that he go off to Padan-aram and there get a wife. Isaac approved the plan and Jacob started. He had a long and lonesome journey before him. No doubt he was somewhat homesick, for he had never gone far from his mother before. His father, too, was so aged and feeble that Jacob could hardly expect to see him again, and his mother possibly might die before he should get back; then, too, Esau hated him bitterly and was ready to kill him at the first chance he should find."

"I don't wonder Jacob felt badly," broke in Charley. "Seems to me I'd have stayed home and tried to make it up with Esau."

"So should I," said Carrie. "I could not have enjoyed any such birthright."

"Nor was Jacob happy, my dear," resumed her kind Grandpa. "There had been so much trickery and deception in the whole affair that his conscience must have troubled him, and nobody can be happy with an accusing conscience. But Jacob trudged on—fearful, won-

dering, and penitent, too, I am sure—until night came, and he lay down to sleep with nothing but a stone for a pillow.”

“A hard pillow, I should think,” said Mary.

“Yes; it was a hard case all through. But sweet sleep and pleasant dreams often come on hard beds; and so it was with Jacob that night.”

“What did he dream?” asked Carrie.

“He had the nightmare awfully,” said her brother.

“No,” said Grandpa, “not the nightmare, but a wonderful dream, a beautiful dream—a dream that Jesus Himself refers to in one of His talks.”

“What was the dream, Grandpa? I am interested in dreams. They are so nice, I think. Do tell us!” exclaimed Carrie.

“Mary may read about it from Genesis xxviii, 12, 13.”

In an instant Mary had the place and read: “And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it: and behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.”

“Well, that seems very queer,” said Carrie. “Jacob had acted so meanly about the birthright, and yet God treats him so nicely.”

“That is why I spoke so positively about Jacob as penitent. Had he not been so, God would not have favored him; but for Abraham’s sake and Isaac’s sake, God was ready to bless even Jacob and to assure him of that blessing in this splendid dream.”

“That is just like God,” said Mary. “He is so good and so forgiving.”

“But what was meant by that ladder?” asked Charley. “I don’t see any good it did. It was very pretty, but it was just a dream.”

“A dream, indeed, Charley,” replied Grandpa; “and yet a dream which God sent to teach Jacob some great lessons.”

“What lessons?” asked the boy, eagerly.



AN ANGEL'S NIGHT AT BETHEL

"Why, think a moment, each of you, and see for yourselves what such a dream taught."

"It taught that there is an open way between heaven and earth," said Mary.



'And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.'—Genesis xxviii, 12.

"And that God's angels go back and forth between God to men," said Carrie.

"And that God stands at the top and watches all that goes on," said Charley.

"And that the road to heaven is direct," said Mary.

"And even when you're asleep it's all the same," said Charley.

"Well done, my little dears!" exclaimed Grandpa. "And now, think how grand a view this must have been for Jacob! From the rocky spot where he lay asleep a pathway of silvery light led up through the darkness—up above the tree-tops, up above the moon and the stars—up to where the Lord Himself, the Light of the world, the Sun of righteousness, stood—Himself the source of all that splendor, the fountain of all that glory; while between Him and the lonely sleeper below, angels, who are God's ministering spirits, trooped back and forth. But, grand as was that display, God added to its glory by Himself speaking to Jacob. I am, said He, the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. Then followed a renewal of the promises which had been given to those noble old patriarchs. The land where Jacob lay asleep was assured to him and his descendants as an inheritance; an immense number of descendants, in whom all the world should be blessed, was promised to him, and God promised to go with Jacob wherever he went and to bring him again to Canaan. Such is the substance of what God said, and all question as to the favor and care of the Lord was dispelled by these words. Happy Jacob! to whom God so lovingly spoke."

"That was too lovely!" exclaimed Mary and Carrie together.

"Jacob awoke. Possibly he was chilled with the night air and stiff from his hard couch; but he remembered what had occurred, and his first exclamation was, Surely the Lord is in this place! He had not suspected that the Lord was so near. When he lay down to sleep it was with misgiving and anxiety; but now that he thought on his vision, a reverential fear came on him, and he said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven. It was a place ever to be remembered by him and his children, so he called it by a new name—Bethel—meaning, the House of God. The stone which he had used for a pillow he set up for a memorial pillar, a sort of monument, that it might mark

this spot in all future years. Then Jacob made a solemn vow that this place should be kept sacred and that he himself would serve God faithfully; then he started on his journey, a wiser and better man than ever before. And now, if Mary will read what Jesus said to Nathaniel, we will see just what that wonderful ladder means for us."

Mary turned to John i, 51, at Grandpa's suggestion, and read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

"Oh!" shouted Charley and Carrie together; "Jesus is the ladder between heaven and earth. Isn't He, Grandpa?"

"Yes; He is our stairway to the skies, and so He taught—No man cometh to the Father but by me. But the grandest comfort is that on every spot of earth this ladder rests. Men may start to their heavenly Father from their own homes, wherever those homes may chance to be."

"Grandpa, isn't the hymn, Nearer, my God, to Thee, founded on this dream?" asked Mary. "It says:

"Though like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness comes over me,
My rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee
Nearer to Thee."

"Yes, Mary. These Bible narratives enter into many of our hymns; I am glad to see you noticing the fact and linking story and hymn together."

Carrie had turned to this hymn while this little chat was going on, and seeing still other references to the dream, she proposed that the hymn be sung. All consented readily, and with this pleasant service the evening was closed.

WHICH HE LOVED BEST; OR, SEEKING ONE AND GETTING TWO.

"**N**OW, Grandpa," said Mary, as the supper was finished, "let us get to work once more. I am so interested in Jacob, I want to hear more of him. I have read about him often, but you make him seem more real than I ever thought him."

"You remember," said Grandpa, as he drew his chair near the table, "the odd way in which Isaac got his wife. Jacob, too, had an odd experience in his mother's country. When he reached that land he came to a well, which was covered with a heavy stone. While talking with some shepherds about the people and the place, who should come near to water her flocks but his own cousin, Rachel, who was very beautiful. Jacob at once ran forward, drew the water for her sheep, and then told her who he was. They cried a little for joy and kissed each other; then she ran to tell the folks at home. In a few moments her father, whose name was Laban, came hurrying back to welcome his nephew, whom he led off to the house. Jacob had a good time there for a few weeks. He did not sit around in idleness, but made himself so useful that his uncle proposed to keep him permanently and pay him good wages. Little suspecting the price Jacob would ask, Laban said to him, What shall thy wages be? And what think you Jacob answered? He did not ask money or land or cattle, but said he, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel."

"Ha, ha, ha," roared Charley; "that was funny wages. I wonder how Rachel liked that bargain."

"I wonder how her sisters liked it," laughed Mary; "especially her older sister, if she had one."

"She had one, Leah by name," continued Grandpa. "Laban agreed to Jacob's terms and Jacob went to work, and he was so happy that the years went by and seemed like nothing more than days to him. Then he asked for his pay—for Rachel as his wife—



"And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter."
Genesis xxix, 18.

when, to his great surprise, Laban insisted that he should marry Leah, and, if he wanted Rachel, whom he surely loved best, that he should work another seven years for her."

"Wasn't that mean?" exclaimed both the girls.

"Rather mean, I admit," said Grandpa, "but they fixed it up by

his marrying both the sisters at once—a custom even now common in that land, but rightly prohibited in every enlightened country.”

“Seeking one and getting two,” said Mary.

“Two wives at the same time,” commented Charley, slowly; and as a merry twinkle shone in his eye, he turned to his mother, saying, “Glad I wasn’t Jacob’s boy, with two mothers to sit down on me.”

“It would take about six mothers to keep you straight,” was Mrs. Reed’s playful answer, and then Grandpa went on with his story.

“Jacob submitted as best he could to what he could not help, and worked on for another seven years; then he concluded to go back to Canaan. But Laban had learned his value, and to induce him to stay offered him a share of the cattle and sheep as his pay. This arrangement suited Jacob, and under it he was growing rich very rapidly. This aroused the envy of his brothers-in-law, and even of Laban himself. Jacob thereupon determined to leave Laban and to set out at once for his own land, his wives approving his decision. They gathered together all their possessions, consisting of cattle, camels, sheep, and goods, and with their servants and children off they started, some riding, some walking, others carrying the little ones or driving the flocks, all enjoying the journey, and altogether making a great company. Laban was shearing his sheep at some distant place when they started, and did not know of their departure till they had been gone three days.”

“Well, that was not right. They certainly should have bidden him good-bye,” said Mary, warmly.

“So Laban thought, especially when he missed some of his household idols, for he was an idolater; so he gathered a company of men and started in pursuit. But God warned him in a dream that he should do Jacob no harm. He hurried on, however, and overtook the party, but, impressed by the warning, he contented himself with some good, fatherly advice. He then spoke of his missing idols, and Jacob bade him search everywhere for them. He did search, but Rachel, who had taken them, deceived him so they were not found.

Then Jacob scolded and stormed at Laban for making these false charges, and Laban begged pardon and asked Jacob to make up."

"And did they?" asked Charley, adding, "I wouldn't have made up with such an old crank as Laban."



"Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels; and he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten."—Genesis xxxi, 17, 18.

"In that Jacob showed a better spirit than Charley's," answered Grandpa. "Jacob did make up with him, and they set up a big stone as a reminder of the good understanding and good-will to which they there and then came. They had a religious service together and a great farewell feast, then they said good-bye and parted."

A FAMOUS WRESTLING MATCH;

OR, THE VICTORIOUS CRIPPLE.

“**W**HAT more is there about Jacob?” asked Carrie of her Grandpa, as the little group met again. “He seems to me a queer man. I don’t know whether to like him or not.”

“He was far from being a perfect man,” replied Grandpa; “and yet God loved him and put great honor on him. Indeed, God honored him with a new and better name, his old name, Jacob, meaning a supplanter, or one who gets advantage unfairly.”

“That was good enough for him, I think,” said Carrie; “for he did take advantage of Esau. But how did it come that he got a new name?”

“Why, in this way. He was no sooner free from Laban than he began to worry about Esau, through whose country he had to pass on his way to Canaan. They had parted in terrible bitterness many years before, as you know, and Esau, who was a wild, roving, lawless chief, like the Arab leaders of to-day, was well able to destroy Jacob and his company if he so pleased. Jacob thought it best, therefore, to send messengers ahead with presents to Esau, so as to pacify him and secure his good-will beforehand. The messengers started; but in a little while they came dashing back, scared almost to death, and bringing news that Esau was coming with four hundred armed men.”

“Hey, boys!” exclaimed Charley. “Guess they’ll pepper Jacob and his wives this time. But go on, Grandpa; excuse me, please.”

“Jacob then was alarmed; what to do he did not know; he thought his end had come; he could neither flee nor fight. But he was a

cunning man. To lose half was not so bad as to lose all; so he divided his company into two parts, in the forlorn hope that if Esau should destroy one, he might suppose it to be all, and allow the other to escape. Jacob himself did not stay with either party, but hurried off to a safe place and began to pray most earnestly, quoting God's promises, confessing his sins, and begging God's help against Esau."

"It seems to me that Jacob never prayed except when he was in some great trouble," said Mary, thoughtfully; "and I am not sure that such a person deserves to be answered."

"Nobody *deserves* to be answered, Mary; but God tells us to call upon Him in the day of trouble and assures us He will answer. We certainly ought to call upon Him in days of prosperity, too; but He is kind and patient, even with the thoughtless and ungrateful."

"But did God answer Jacob?" Mary persisted. "It don't seem to me that He should have answered him."

"He did not answer at once; so Jacob resorted again to his own schemes. He sent presents by several successive messengers, with winning words, for Esau; for Jacob said to himself, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face. But even then he did not feel altogether safe; so he sent his family across a little stream, the brook Jabbok, and then crept away in the darkness to pray again. While he was praying, suddenly he was seized by a person of immense strength. Probably at first he thought himself in the hands of Esau's men; but he soon found that his antagonist was greater than any man. It was an angel—like those he had seen in his dream of the wonderful ladder. Jacob knew that his time to succeed had now come. He was sure God was favoring him. A messenger of God had come, and Jacob determined to make the most of it. So he seized the angel and the angel seized him. Of course, the angel could have crushed him in an instant. By a mere touch he threw Jacob's thigh out of joint. But Jacob hung to him with all his might. Let me go, said the angel, for the day breaketh. He could have gone had he really cared to,

but he was testing Jacob by that request. Jacob stood the test grandly, for he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

"Good for Jacob!" shouted Charley. "He was no slouch, was he? That was a wrestling match worth talking about, wasn't it?"



*"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."—
Genesis xxxii, 24.*

"Why, Charley!" exclaimed Mary, reprovingly. "How can you speak so about such a man?"

"I won't do him any harm," said the boy, apologetically. "I mean he did just right."

"That is what the angel thought of him; for he did bless Jacob

right there and then and gave him a new and honorable name as a reward for his courage and perseverance."

"What name did he give him?" asked all at once.

"Israel, which means, Prince with God."



"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept."—Genesis xxxiii, 4.

"I'll bet Jacob—Israel, I mean—was glad then."

"Yes, Charley. Lame though he was, he was glad, for he knew that God favored him and that Esau would do him no harm. The next day Esau met him lovingly, and had a good time with him."

"That was just too nice!" was Carrie's closing comment.

THE FRUITS OF ENVY; OR, BARTERING AWAY A BROTHER.

"WHAT can you tell me about the sons of Jacob?" asked Grandpa, as his happy little hearers gathered about him, several little neighbors also being in the group.

"He had twelve sons, and they are called the twelve patriarchs," was Mary's answer.

"One was Joseph," said Charley, "and he was the right kind of a boy."

"Benjamin was the youngest," timidly ventured one of the visitors.

"But Joseph was the nicest," added another.

"Oh! I see who is the favorite," said Grandpa; "so Joseph shall be the hero to-night. His father had become very rich. His older brothers were almost always away from home attending to the flocks and herds, which were scattered about over the country wherever pasture and water could be found. Joseph had become a well-grown lad, about seventeen years of age; Benjamin was a little boy. These two were the sons of Rachel, and she was dead. Jacob was very fond of these two boys; they were his constant companions. He dressed and cared for them in the very best manner. This made the other brothers envious, especially of Joseph, who often brought them orders from their father, and who several times had dreamed of himself as a great man ruling over the rest of the family. Can you tell me about his dreams?"

"He dreamed," said Mary, "that while out in the harvest-field his brothers' sheaves all bowed down to his sheaf. Afterward he dreamed that the sun, moon, and stars made obeisance to him."

"What is meant by made obeisance?" asked Charley.

"Made the best bow to him," answered Grandpa.

"They must have thought he was putting on airs," said Charley, with something of a contemptuous curl on his lip.

"I guess they did," added Grandpa; "and so one day when he came to Dotham, a long way from home, to bring them messages from their father, they concluded to put him out of the way, and be done with him and his dreams. He could not escape. They were ten to one, and the ten were men, the one only a boy. First they thought to kill him; then they put him into a deep pit. His brother Reuben meant to get him out of that on the sly and send him home, but in Reuben's absence a few hours later a caravan of traders bound for Egypt came along. To these men, who were ready to buy anything, the brothers sold Joseph for a slave, and he was led away to the far-off land to which they were bound. So they bartered away their brother."

"How far off was Egypt, Grandpa?" asked Charley, with an eye to the actual amount of traveling to be done.

"About four hundred miles, over rough and dreary stretches of land infested with cruel and thievish tribes of people. The whole distance had to be done on foot. There were neither railroads, canal-boats, nor stage-coaches, and for slaves such as Joseph had become there were not even horses or camels to ride. About ten or fifteen miles a day is as much as a caravan can travel, so the journey was long and tedious."

"Why did not Joseph run off and go back home?" inquired Charley; "he could easily have done that."

"Not so easily as you think. Aside from the distance and the difficulties of the way, so valuable a slave as he would be carefully watched. Probably, too, he was put upon his honor not to run away, and with Joseph that would be stronger than any chain. He would not break his word."

"But why didn't he write or send word home?" asked Carrie.



"Few persons in that day could write at all. There were no post-offices or mail-carriers to accommodate the people, and between one nation and another there was hardly any communication at all. As to sending word, Joseph may have tried it. He probably did try it, but that method would not be very certain. But back of Joseph's stay in Egypt there was a purpose of God's to keep him there and to use him there in a most important and honorable way. Joseph, doubtless, had been made to know that this was God's will; so he cheerfully waited for God to work out the whole matter."

"Yes, but God let Joseph get into prison," objected Charley.

"But he brought him out of it with higher honor," replied Grandpa.
"An old hymn says:

" 'In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright.'"

That is what He did with Joseph; He did bring him out more bright."

"Why, yes," chimed in Mary; "by Joseph being in prison Pharaoh heard of him and called on him to interpret his dream. In that way he became pleased with Joseph and gave him charge over gathering and distributing food in the famine. Joseph could not have gone home while he was in prison, and when he became such a great man I don't suppose he wanted to go home."

"Probably not," added Grandpa; "he had come to see that God was with him in Egypt, and he was willing to let God work it all out."

"And that is a blessed way to live," Mrs. Reed added. "To be where God would have you, even though it be in prison, and to do what He wishes, even though it be to suffer, is the whole of one's duty and the sure path to happiness."

"I always thought Joseph had lots of ups and downs in his life," said Charley, as the party rose to separate; "but I guess the *ups* had the best of it."

"Very likely," said Grandpa, "for those who live aright always rise. It is the sure way to get up in the world."

FROM PRISON TO POWER; OR, GOOD BROUGHT OUT OF EVIL.

“**W**HAT happened to Joseph when they got him to Egypt?” asked Charley. “Did they sell him right off, or were they stuck with him?”

“I don’t know,” answered Grandpa. “He was a very desirable slave, being young, handsome, healthy, and intelligent. His owners would be very apt to hold him for a good customer who would pay a big price. Such a customer they found in Potiphar, who was a high officer under Pharaoh, the King.”

“How much did he pay for Joseph?” was Charley’s next question.

“We do not know. He took Joseph, however, to his house to serve there, and so trustworthy and competent did he find Joseph, that by and by he made him ruler over all his goods. Everything was trusted to the young man, and Potiphar was so well pleased that he asked no questions, but fully enjoyed the prosperity which came under Joseph’s care. But at last base falsehoods were told concerning Joseph, and in a fit of anger Potiphar threw Joseph into prison.”

“That was too bad,” declared Carrie and Mary together. “But,” asked the first, “couldn’t Joseph prove his innocence and get out?”

“No, darling; he was only a slave, and justice in those times was not for the poor and the lowly. A great man had put him in prison, and there he had to stay. He had no friend to look after his interests. He was alone in Egypt.”

“A hard case for the lad,” added Charley. “I wish I’d been there; I’d have seen to him.”

“That’s kind, Charley,” said Grandpa; “but while alone and friend-

less so far as men were concerned, his interests were not neglected, for the Lord was with Joseph."

"That's all right," responded the boy; "but what good could that do him in prison?"

"So much that the keeper of the prison made him overseer of all the other prisoners. He was the head man there, and all he did prospered. By this means he was at good work, and except that he could not leave the prison, he had all that he could desire. Then, too, he could do good to his fellow-prisoners. For instance, one night two of them had strange dreams, which worried them all the next day till Joseph interpreted or explained them to the men. This made one of them happy, for it assured him he was about to be set free and to be restored to honor in the King's palace. The other was not so happy, for it assured him he was about to lose his head."

"And did all this come true?" asked Mary.

"It did; and that, too, as Joseph said, within three days. But the King's chief butler, who was the one restored to power in the palace, forgot Joseph, and forgot a promise he made to try to get Joseph out of prison."

"That was mean!" exclaimed Carrie, indignantly. "I trust I'll never forget my friends, whether in prosperity or adversity."

"How did Joseph get out of prison, then, Grandpa?"

"Why, Charley, he did not get out for two full years. Then the King had two strange dreams in one night. They worried him very much, but none of his wise men could tell him what they meant."

"What were the dreams, Grandpa?" asked Carrie. "I have read them, but I really forget what they were."

"Turn to Genesis xli, 1-7, my dear, and read about them."

Carrie did as directed and read: "And it came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh dreamed, and behold, he stood by the river. And behold, there came up out of the river seven well-favored kine and fat-fleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river ill-favored and lean-

fleshed, and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river, And the ill-favored and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favored and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed the second time, and behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one



"And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do."—Genesis xli, 25.

stalk, rank and good. And behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream."

"That was a dream worth having," exclaimed Charley.

"How did it come, Grandpa, that Joseph was called in when the wise men failed?" asked Mary. "I thought he was quite forgotten in the prison."

"As these dreams were talked over," answered Grandpa, "the chief butler remembered Joseph and told the King what Joseph had done for himself and the other prisoner. Then Joseph was sent for. After shaving and putting on clean clothes, he came and stood before the troubled King, who told him the dreams and asked what they meant."

"That was a mighty good chance for him. I'd like some big King to send for me and give me a chance; I'd show him some things—I would."

"That's what Joseph did, Charley. He showed the King some things, explaining that for seven years there was to be plenty in the land, and then for seven years so terrible a famine that all the food would be consumed. Joseph did not claim to explain this by any knowledge or skill of his own, but solely by the help of the Lord his God."

"What did Pharaoh say to Joseph's explanation?" asked Carrie.

"He asked what he should do, and Joseph told him to store up provisions for seven years while they were abundant, and by this stock to keep the people alive in the seven years of famine."

"That was cute," said the boy. "That's what I'd have told the old gentleman to do."

"He, too, thought it was cute," said Grandpa, "and he very sensibly thought Joseph the man to carry out the scheme, so he said at once, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt; only in the throne will I be greater than thou."

"That was a boost!" exclaimed Charley. "He bounced from prison to power quick, didn't he?"

"Yes, Charley," said Grandpa, smiling at the lad's odd way of saying it. "God knows how to bring good out of evil."

HUNGRY AND HELPLESS;

OR, BOYHOOD'S DREAMS FULFILLED.

"GRANDPA, in the account of Joseph's strange doings in that strange land of Egypt there are two verses that I don't understand at all. Let me read them." In this way Mary began the next conversation. Grandpa nodded assent, and she read as follows:

"And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee; and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt."

"The ring, the robe, and the chain," said Grandpa, as Mary ended, "were tokens of royal authority. He who wore them represented the King, and was honored accordingly. The second chariot was that next in rank to the King's, his being the first. To ride in the second chariot was to appear in public as next in power to the King himself. The cry, Bow the knee, was usual when royal persons or their representatives went abroad. Altogether, these honors made Joseph appear in a very exalted position, and yet he was then a young man, only some thirty years of age."

"What did Joseph do for the King?" asked Charley.

"His first duty was to go through the land during the seven years of plenty and gather up all the provisions he found. These he stored away very carefully. When the famine came and people began to be in want, he was to sell food or give it away, as he saw best, and in this way to save the people from starving."

"I can't imagine how such a terrible famine could occur. We don't have famines now, do we, Grandpa?"

"Yes, Mary. In Ireland, in 1846, the potato-rot destroyed the only crop of that country, and a fearful famine followed. Relief



"And he made him ride in the second chariot which he had: and they cried before him, Bow the knee and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt."—Genesis xli, 43.

ships were sent from this and other countries, but thousands of people starved. In 1872 the rice crop failed in India, and famine followed. In 1874 locusts destroyed the vegetation in the State of Kansas, and terrible want followed. In Egypt famine occurs frequently when rain fails to fall in the interior, in which case the river

Nile does not overflow and water the lower country, and so, for the want of moisture, crops do not come to perfection, and in some instances are wholly lost."

"Oh! dear," sighed Carrie, "I hope we'll never have a famine."

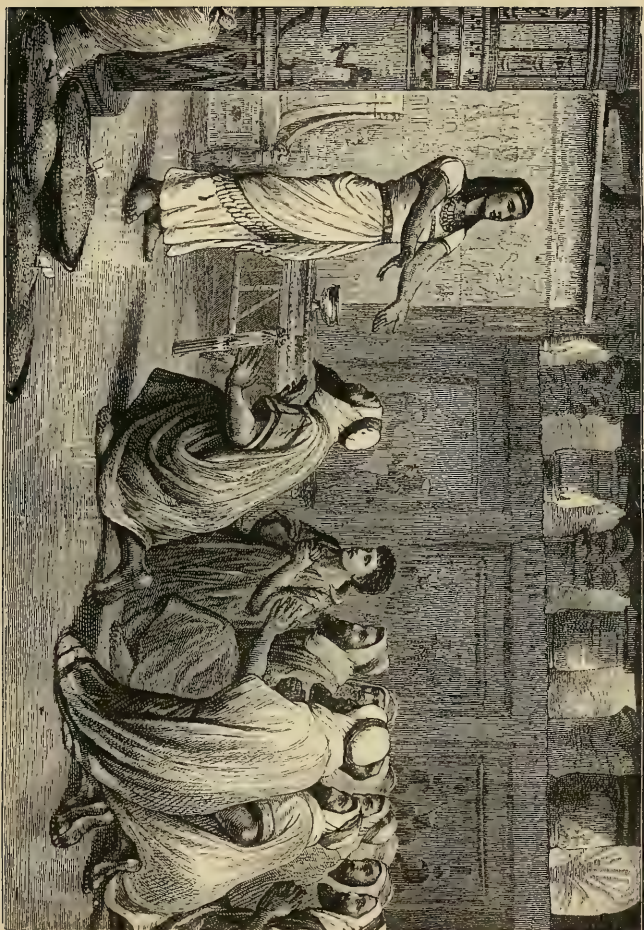
"We may, darling, but the chances are in our favor, for if our crops were to fail the telegraph would at once tell our wants, and railroads and steamships would hurry in produce from other places. We would have to pay more for food, but the probability is that we could buy all we might need."

"But wasn't Joseph's famine the worst there ever was?" asked Carrie, with almost tearful interest.

"Probably, for it continued so long and reached so far. Away off in Canaan rich men like Joseph's father were in want. They were hungry and helpless. Food could not be had in their land at any price. But there came a report that food could be had in Egypt, so Jacob sent his ten elder sons to buy what they needed. In this way it came to pass that they came face to face with Joseph, whom they had not seen for twenty years or more."

"No wonder they did not know him," said Mary, "and he was now so great and so grand."

"But he would very easily know them," continued Grandpa. "No doubt he had looked for them, and when they really came, he determined to try them and see what sort of men they had become. He began by talking roughly to them, and insisting that they were spies. Then he locked them up for three days and afterward sent them off with food, but keeping Simeon as a pledge that they would come back and bring Benjamin, their youngest brother. In these troubles they thought of their own cruelty to Joseph so many years before, and said to each other that because of it this trial had come. Poor Simeon lay in prison while the brothers hurried back home. On the way they were surprised by finding in the top of each man's sack the very money which they had paid for food. This worried them sorely. On reaching home they told their father all that had happened,



THE BROTHER DISCLOSED.

and his heart was almost broken for Simeon's absence and because Benjamin, too, had to go to Egypt. He wept aloud, and declared it would bring down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave."

"That was too bad," said Carrie, with a voice full of emotion. "Joseph would not have asked for Benjamin if he had thought, I'm sure."

"He wanted to make his brothers taste the sorrows they had caused others, and he knew that in the end they would be made glad. They delayed to return for a few days, dreading it, no doubt, but at last hunger compelled, and back they had to go. It was hard for Jacob to spare Benjamin, but it had to be done. They started back with presents for the great ruler and with money to pay for the first lot of corn and to buy more. In a few days they were again before Joseph. Then they had a fresh alarm. He ordered them to his own house, and they feared it meant evil; but they had to go. At the door they talked with his head servant, but he spoke pleasantly to them and brought Simeon out of jail to join them. So they waited for Joseph, with whom they learned they were to dine. At last he came, and they all bowed before him, thus fulfilling the dream of his youth. Then he fed them, went out and had a cry to himself, came back and had a merry time with them. Then he let them start homeward once more, but again the money had been returned into their sacks, and a silver cup of his had been put into Benjamin's sack. On the pretext of their having stolen these treasures, he had them brought back once more, and Benjamin was demanded as a slave because of the cup. Then they all wept and plead before Joseph, protesting their innocence, until he could stand it no longer, but weeping aloud, he made himself known to them and fully forgave them."

"Hurrah for Joseph!" shouted Charley, as Grandpa ceased speaking; "he was a splendid chap, and don't you forget it."

"He was indeed. No sooner had he assured his brothers of their safety than he said, Haste ye, and go up to my father and say unto

him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not. All his father's people were bidden to come also, with their children and flocks and herds. Indeed, they were to bring all they had right into Egypt, where a section of the best land, called Goshen, was set apart for them."



"And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen. . . . And he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while."—Genesis xli, 29.

"That was splendid," exclaimed Mary. "Joseph was so great and so generous I don't wonder his family were willing to move into the land where he ruled. I'd have moved myself to be near so nice and so rich an uncle."

HARD TIMES;

OR, MUCH WORK AND LITTLE PAY.

"I HEARD some men talking to-day about hard times," began Grandpa Goodwin when the children were settled quietly and looking expectantly at him. "They agreed that we were having hard times, many people being out of work and those at work being poorly paid. I do not think they were altogether fair, but I can tell you a story about times that were really very hard."

"Is this a Bible story, Grandpa?" questioned Carrie, seemingly in doubt from the beginning made.

"Yes, darling—a Bible story; for God's people have often seen hard times. You remember how splendidly Joseph settled his kindred in Goshen and how happy they were. They came at once when Joseph sent for them. Nothing but want was in Canaan and plenty was in Egypt; so they gathered together their children and servants, with all their goods, and soon were on their journey. They had no telegraph to announce their approach; so as they neared Joseph's city, one of the brothers hurried on to tell him. Then Joseph ordered out his own splendid chariot and drove out to Goshen to meet his father. That was a happy meeting. The Bible says that Joseph fell on his father's neck and wept a good while. He did not weep for sorrow, but for joy, and his dear old father said, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Charley. "I wouldn't want my father to die when he gets home just because he saw my face, and I don't think I'd cry much either."

"A little while after their arrival," continued Grandpa, "Pharaoh

sent for Jacob and had a talk with the grand old man and with some of the brothers also. He welcomed them to Egypt, and they were soon happily settled and greatly prospered, for God favored them for their father's sake and their brother's. They little thought in



"They did set over them task-masters, to afflict them with their burdens."—Exodus i, 11.

that glad hour of the troubles they were yet to see in Egypt. But dear, old Jacob died, and finally Joseph, too, passed away. The King, also, who had honored Joseph, and all the people who had seen and known him, died. But Jacob's descendants had become very numerous in Egypt and were in all parts of the land. At last there

came a cruel King, who thought these people were becoming entirely too many. We must grind them down, said he, and kill them off. So he began to build great cities and made the Israelites do an immense amount of terribly hard work; he also put them under task-masters, who drove and beat and abused them until their lives were a continual scene of torture. The cruel King also ordered that all their boy babies should be thrown into the river. So he abused them everywhere and all the time."

"Those were hard times indeed," said Mary. "I'd rather be out of work and starve than work in that terrible way."

"I wouldn't have done their old work," added Charley. "I'd have run away."

"Many of them thought that, too, I suppose," said Grandpa; "but we don't know that any of them did get away. They were too closely watched. At last, however, better fortune happened to one of their little boys. His mother would not drown him, but she was afraid to keep him about the house, lest some of Pharaoh's soldiers should find and kill him; so she made a little basket like a boat and cemented it so it would not leak. Into this she put her baby boy, whose name was—what?"

"Moses!" came from them all in an instant.

"Yes; Moses. And that was the greatest basketful of blessing the world ever saw. Can you tell why?"

"Because Moses got the children of Israel out of their hard times," answered Carrie.

"Because Moses became so great and good," added Mary.

"Well answered, my dears! I see that you are acquainted with Moses," said Grandpa, pleasantly. "But our hard times make it necessary for me to go and call on some of the poor to-night; so we will content ourselves with this little chat. To-morrow night we will see how better times did come through the little boy who was hidden in the basket."

A WAIF ON THE WATER; OR, FLOATING INTO FORTUNE.

"**H**OW it came to pass," began Grandpa, "that Moses led the children of Israel to better times is what I want to tell you to-night. When his mother put him in the little basket by the river, she sent his sister, Miriam, to watch, lest any harm should come to him. When the daughter of Pharaoh found him, his little sister came running to her and asked whether she might go and get a nurse for the baby. Permission was given, probably more in fun or girlish romance than for aught else, and Moses' own mother was soon engaged to nurse and bring him up for the Princess. From this loving mother, and while yet a little child, Moses learned to serve God and to sympathize with his suffering kindred. Though a little waif on the water, yet, under God's guidance, he floated into the best of fortunes."

"Did he live in the palace of that wicked King?" asked Carrie.

"In all probability he did. We know that the Princess had him taught in all the learning of that day. He became a thoroughly educated and highly cultivated man. She also wished him to give up all interest in the Israelites and to become her adopted son; but Moses refused, choosing rather, as Paul says, to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

"Well, that was noble, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Mary," continued Grandpa; "you will search long and far before you find a man who is the equal of Moses in all that is great and good. What to do for his people was not at all clear to him, till one day he was out looking on his brethren at their work, when



he saw an Egyptian task-master cruelly abusing one of them. That was more than Moses could stand. He sprang forward, slew the Egyptian on the spot, and buried his body in the sand."

"Served him right!" shouted Charley, warmly. "Good for Moses!"



"And he looked this way and that way, and, when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand."—Exodus ii, 12.

"It came near not being good for Moses, though," added Grandpa, "for his act was seen by others and was talked about until Pharaoh himself heard it and determined to kill Moses. Learning this, possibly from his foster-mother, the Princess, Moses left Egypt in haste and went away toward the far East, into the land of Midian."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Mary. "He was so much needed."

"Possibly not so much of a pity," replied Grandpa. "God was fitting him for his coming work. God was in no hurry, either, strange though that may seem. Moses went away from Egypt and stayed away forty years. At the end of this time God appeared in a burning bush and spoke to Moses, ordering him to go back to Egypt and demand of the King that the children of Israel should go free. Moses was afraid to undertake such a work, but God led him along till he and his brother Aaron met, and, on God's orders, went together and made the demand. The King scouted the idea, and at once gave orders that the tasks of the people should be terribly increased. That made them fairly rage at Moses, and he naturally felt much discouraged at the failure."

"I should think he would," answered Charley; "and I don't see how he could fail if the Lord really sent him."

"That was just the way Moses felt," answered Grandpa. "He had gone to his kinsmen and told them what the Lord meant to do; he had shown them the signs God appointed to prove his errand; the people had joyously hailed him as a deliverer; but now he was spurned by the King and the people were harder worked and worse treated than ever. They were bitterly disappointed and——"

"Tearing mad, I'll bet!" interrupted Charley, with an excited manner. "They must have thought he had been fooling with them."

"Well, yes; I suppose that was so. When they saw Moses and Aaron they gave them a piece of their mind in rather bitter fashion, so that Moses was quite out of heart and said to the Lord, Why is it that Thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast Thou delivered Thy people at all."

"Poor Moses!" sighed Carrie. "He floated into good fortune at the start, but now bad fortune seems to be his."

"He got left badly that time," said Charley, and just at that moment Grandpa was called away; whereupon Mary said, "And we got left, too, didn't we?"



THE VISION IN THE BUSH.

A STRANGE SNAKE STORY; OR, ONE SWALLOWING A MULTITUDE.

"GRANDPA," began Carrie, "I was reading in the fourth chapter of Genesis where it tells about Moses and about his rod becoming a serpent. I must say I don't understand it. Tell me about that snake business."

"Oh! yes," exclaimed Charley. "Snakes are my chums."

"What you refer to, Carrie, occurred when God appeared in the burning bush and gave Moses orders to go to Pharaoh and ask him to let the people go. Moses wanted something to prove to the Israelites and the Egyptians that God had sent him. He stood there with his shepherd's staff in his hand, and God said, What is that in thine hand? A rod, answered Moses. Cast it on the ground, said the Lord. Moses did so, and instantly it became a great writhing, wriggling snake. Moses was nervous about snakes, for he turned and ran."

"I don't wonder!" exclaimed Mary; while Carrie cried, "Ugh!" and started, as if a real snake were after her.

"But the Lord stopped Moses and said, Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail; which no sooner had Moses done than the snake became a stiff, wooden rod, as before. Some other signs were given Moses, but this is the snake part about which you were in doubt."

"Yes, Grandpa; and I don't see why God used such a horrid thing as a snake to prove that He was with Moses."

"These signs did the work, however, and convinced the Israelites that God had sent Moses to deliver them. We are told that after he had done these miracles the people believed."

"Yes; so would I have believed. But I would have been scared all the same by a horrid snake."

"And yet, Carrie, if you saw a man who could change sticks to snakes and snakes to sticks; you would be sure he had some super-



*"And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent."—
Exodus vii, 10.*

human help, even though the snakes were horrid. The probability is that the Israelites, too, thought snakes were horrid; but in what Moses did they saw power that could make or unmake horrid things, and so a power that could make or unmake the horrible things of their slavery in Egypt."

"That I hadn't thought of, but I guess it's so. One who can make or unmake snakes can manage any other horrible thing."

"Another reason why God used the serpent in this miracle," continued Grandpa, "was the fact that in Egypt serpents were esteemed very highly. The god of good and the god of evil were each supposed by the Egyptians to dwell in serpents. Serpents were worshiped; they were carved on temples and monuments; they were embalmed, and so preserved as sacred and precious relics; for this reason no better form of miracle could have been selected for Egypt than one showing power over the snake."

"Well, that is a reason I never heard of," said Mary. "I always supposed the stick was turned into a snake just because it happened to be in Moses' hand and it looked so much like a snake. But, Grandpa, Pharaoh's magicians made snakes the same way."

"Yes, they were called, and by their enchantments—that is, by their manœuvres and hocus-pocus—they produced snakes. But how much trick there was in this we do not know. The final proof in the case, however, was that when the several serpents fell to fighting, that made from Moses' rod swallowed all the rest; the one swallowed the multitude, and so ended the fight."

"Good for the snake!" shouted Charley. "They're great on the swallow, I know. I saw one take in a bird, feathers and all."

"I guess that settled the case for Moses, didn't it, Grandpa?"

"No, Carrie; Pharaoh still refused to let the people go. Then God sent a variety of plagues upon the Egyptians and afflicted them terribly; but the King grew more and more stubborn. Water was turned into blood; frogs became so numerous as to cover the land; flies swarmed over everything; cattle died of a terrible plague; boils broke out on all the people; hail fell from the clouds and battered all their vegetation to ruin; locusts swarmed over the land; darkness rested on everything of theirs for three days, and yet Pharaoh would not let the people go. God then determined on one final and fearful blow, but of that we will talk to-morrow."

FLYING FOR FREEDOM; OR, A MARVELOUS DELIVERANCE.

CARRIE opened the next talk by asking, "What was that final blow you spoke of, Grandpa? It seems to me God had already struck such awful blows at the Egyptians that nothing could be worse."

"No one knows all that God can do either in a loving way or an afflictive way," replied Grandpa. "He is terrible to His foes and precious to His friends. In this case He determined that all the first-born, both of men and beasts, should die at midnight on a certain day."

"Of His own people too?" asked Carrie, in surprise.

"Yes, unless they should sprinkle the blood of a lamb on the posts and lintels of their front doors. If that were done, the destroying angel, who was to go through the land and do this fearful work, would pass over their houses and leave them unharmed."

"Oh! that was the Passover, wasn't it, Grandpa?" exclaimed Charley. "Our Sunday-school lesson was about it once. It seems to me awful for so many people to die in one night, and all without any sickness or accident."

"Not more awful than their cruel abuse and murdering of the children of Israel," said Mary, her sense of justice making her tones very decided as she spoke.

"That was the Passover, as Charley says," resumed Grandpa—"a feast which to this day Israelites keep with great fidelity, in remembrance of the fact that God spared their forefathers in Egypt so many years ago."

"How were they spared?" asked Charley.

"Why, they obeyed God, and sprinkled blood on the doorposts and lintels of their houses, as He told them to do. They waited within doors and ate a hurried and simple meal, which God had directed,



There was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead.—
Exodus xii, 30.

Midnight drew near; all about them was quiet; there was no sign of trouble; none of the Egyptians suspected harm; midnight was just at hand; it came. Listen! a wail is heard; another and yet another. Lamentations and weeping rise on all sides and swell into a great cry. In every house there is one dead. In palace and in

dungeon, among men and beasts, all the firstborn are smitten with death except alone in the houses of the children of Israel, on the doorposts and lintels of which the blood of the lamb had been sprinkled."

"How terrible!" said both the girls together, and really shuddering at the story.

"No wonder," resumed Grandpa, "that Pharaoh rose at once, in the dead of night though it was, and that he commanded Moses to go, and to take with him his troublesome people. Go they did that very night, urged by the Egyptians, and enriched with presents from them to appease the God of Israel lest He should strike again and slay the entire nation. So the children of Israel fled from the land of their bitter bondage to gain their long-lost freedom."

"That was grand," said Mary; "but why did Pharaoh change his mind and chase them afterward?"

"Because his heart was full of evil. When the first pang of that terrible midnight scene had passed, he began to think of the valuable slaves he had lost, and he determined to bring them back. So he marshaled his soldiers, and, taking the lead himself, began the pursuit. Moses had a good start, and pushed on toward the Red Sea, which lay between Egypt and the Arabian peninsula. Pharaoh thought Moses would be trapped in this position. Along the shores of that sea he could not escape either to the north or the south, for steep rocks and strong military stations were there; so Pharaoh thought he could march right down on the Israelites, hemmed in on the seashore, and capture the whole of them. When the Israelites heard of his coming, they were terribly frightened; they thought their end had come. But at God's command Moses reached out his rod over the sea, and lo! the waters rolled back, leaving an open path through the water by which the children of Israel passed over dry-shod."

"That's a tip-top way to cross the ocean," exclaimed Charley; "it don't make you sea-sick."

"Pharaoh arrived just in time to see this wonderful sight, and he knew of no reason why he should not cross by the same path, which remained invitingly open. So he ordered an advance, and down into the depths of the sea-bottom his chariots rolled and his footmen marched. Moses and his followers were now safely on the other side; Pharaoh and his soldiers were in the deepest part of the sea. Then Moses lifted up his wonderful rod again, and back rolled the mighty waters, thundering down upon the heads of the doomed army below. Horses, chariots, and drowning men were tossed into struggling heaps. It was for them the struggle of death. In a few moments all was over, and they were in the presence of the God they had despised."

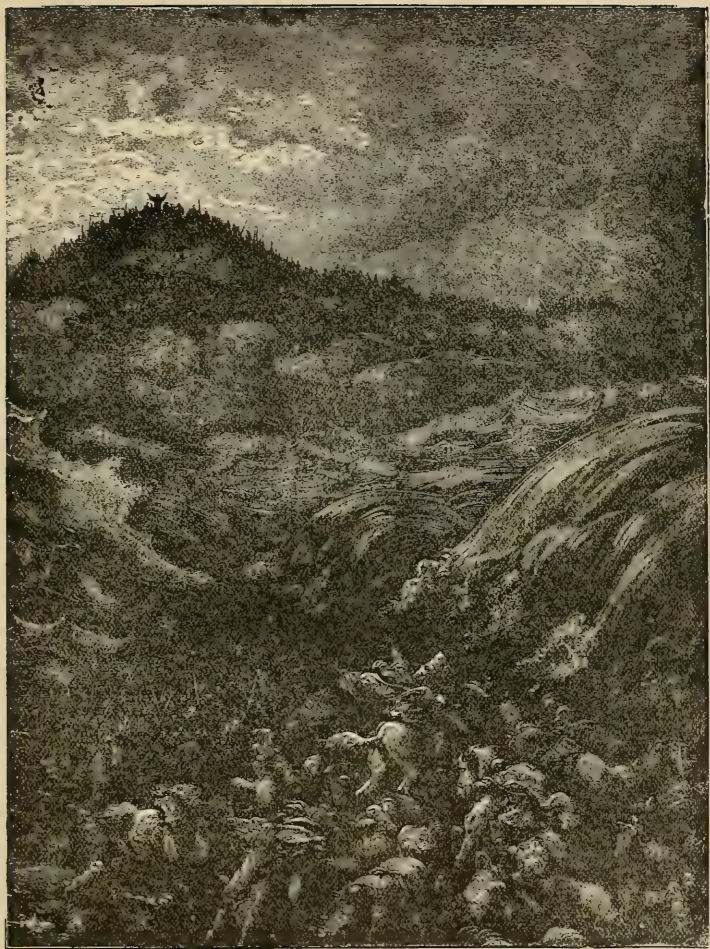
A deep silence rested on the little company as Grandpa ceased speaking. After a moment's pause, Mary said, "How thankful the Israelites must have been at that marvelous deliverance!"

"They were," said Grandpa. "Moses and the men sang a splendid song of praise, which is recorded in full in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus. His sister also, with a company of women, sang and danced for joy with the music of their timbrels and harps."

On Grandpa's reference to the fifteenth of Exodus, Mary looked for the place, and in a moment exclaimed, "Oh! this is beautiful; let me read part of it." All agreeing, she read: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation; He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy."

THE NIGHT PASSAGE OF THE JEA.





OVERWHELMED IN THE WATERS.

"That is the scene Moore describes so splendidly in a poem which I learned when I was a little girl," said Mrs. Reed, as Mary ceased.

"Repeat it for us mother, please do," urged the children. She yielded willingly to their desires, and repeated as follows:

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, His people are free.
Sing, for the pride of 'the tyrant is broken—
His chariots, his horsemen, all splendid and brave;
How vain was their boast, for the Lord hath but spoken,
And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, His people are free.

"Praise to the Conqueror, praise to the Lord!
His word was our arrow, His breath was our sword.
Who shall return to tell Egypt the story
Of those she sent forth in the hour of her pride?
For the Lord hath looked out from His pillar of glory,
And all her brave thousands are dashed in the tide.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, His people are free."

"That was indeed a splendid triumph for Jehovah," added Grandpa in conclusion.



CELEBRATING THE VICTORY

HANDS UP; OR, HOW THEY WON THE BATTLE.

I DON'T believe anybody else ever beat his enemies so easily as Moses did," said Charley. "Old Pharaoh and his soldiers were washed out pretty quick that day."

"There are other cases," replied Grandpa, "where the Lord's enemies were destroyed quite as strangely if not so quickly. For instance: The Israelites had not much more than begun their journey in the Arabian Peninsula, east of the Red Sea, when they were suddenly pounced upon in their rear by a roving band of robbers—such as even now infest that country. The Israelites had to fight for their goods and their lives. The attack was a sort of dash. It did not settle things one way or another, so Moses determined to make a new attack on Amalek, which was the name of this band of thieves, and to completely destroy it. He called Joshua, one of his bravest and best men, and arranged that on the next day he should lead all the men to a set battle with these enemies. Moses himself agreed to take position on the top of a neighboring hill and to hold out the wonderful rod by which he had already worked so many miracles in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the land where they were then journeying."

"I don't see what good it would do just to hold out the rod," said Charley, with disapprobation evident in his tones. "If Moses had gone into the fight himself and hit right and left with his stick, he would have done some good. But he might have got hurt there."

"Ah! Charley," said Grandpa, "you forget that God had made that rod a token of His own presence and power. When Moses



lifted up the rod, it was an appeal to God to use His promised power and to show His presence on behalf of Israel. It was a prayer acted, rather than spoken. Whoever could see Moses could see what he was doing and would be reminded that God was their helper."

"Oh! I see," replied the boy. "I didn't think of it that way. Moses prayed with the rod, didn't he?"

"Yes; he did just that, and that was his part in the battle. Joshua fought, Moses prayed. Prayer and effort always go well together. Jesus commanded us to watch and pray."

"How did the battle come out?" asked Charley. "Who beat?"

"Well, Joshua got together his soldiers early in the morning and out he went to fight. Moses, with Aaron, his brother, and another good man named Hur, went to the hill-top, as agreed. The battle began. All went well for Israel until Moses became tired of holding up his rod. His hand sank, and as it sank Amalek got the better of the battle. He made an effort and lifted the rod again, and then Joshua got the better of it. But Moses could not hold up his hand all day. That was just impossible. And yet, on his holding it up with the rod, the success of Israel was hanging. What could he do? how should he act? Why, what more natural and proper than that the good men on either side of him should come to his help and hold up the weary hands—rod and all?"

"To be sure!" broke in Carrie. "It was little as they could do."

"Certainly, my dear. It made the prayer all the stronger that three united in it. And they did more than this. They brought a large stone and placed it for Moses to sit upon. So they helped him by making him comfortable, and their help was acceptable to God. The rod was held up and the battle was pushed till night came, by which time Joshua had won a complete victory. Amalek no more troubled Israel. That was the way they won that battle."

"Well, that was a novel way to win a battle, I am sure!" was Mary's exclamation, while Charley shouted, "Hands up!—then we'll come out all right."

A POOR EXCUSE.

OR, WHAT CAME OUT OF THE FIRE.

“**W**HAT queer times the Israelites had in their journey, didn’t they, Grandpa? It must have been real fun for the boys and girls who were with them—a sort of an all-summer picnic.”

“I am not so sure about that, Carrie,” answered Grandpa; “for they had many hard experiences on the way. One of the most remarkable was when they camped at the foot of Mount Sinai. This name belongs to a jagged mass of rocks lying in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, the highest pinnacles rising to a height of about nine thousand feet. Among these peaks there is an abundance of camping ground, and here the Israelites were halted to receive the law from God.”

“What law?” asked Charley.

“The law God wished men to keep, including the Ten Commandments and much else. Moses went up several times into the Mount to talk with God, and at last God set a day when He would show His presence to all the people. It was a great day for them. They prepared for it by careful washings and fastings. When it came there were terrible clouds on the mountains and such thundering and lightning as made the people tremble; then came smoke and fire playing about the peaks, then an earthquake, and through all the din a clear blast, as of a trumpet, was heard. Then Moses went up into the Mount, and there God gave him the Ten Commandments, written on two slabs of stone.”

“And are those the same commandments we now repeat?”

"The same; and how much God thought of them was shown by the terrific splendor of the scene in which they were first given."

"It was terrible, indeed," remarked Mary; "and I am sure the people must have felt like doing all they could to keep that law."

"Far from it, I am sorry to say," was Grandpa's reply. "Moses was forty days and nights on that mount. He was covered by a cloud, and communed there with God. God wrote the Ten Commandments, and Moses wrote all else that God wished him to teach the people. At last Moses started down, and was soon joined by his tried captain, Joshua, who had waited patiently for his return. Together they hurried on to meet the people and to tell them of God. As they did so, a strange sound reached their ears. What could it be? It was the voice of singing. What could it mean? Down they hastened, and when they came in sight of the people, there were the men and the women dancing around a gilded calf which was mounted on a pedestal in the very midst of the camp. There they were, sinning right under the shadow of Sinai, while Moses was in the very act of bringing the law direct from God to guide them in the right way. Utterly despairing of any good from such people, Moses dashed the stone tablets to the ground, shivering them to pieces, and then plunged in among them to stop their sinful sport."

"Why, what great harm was there in dancing around that calf?" asked Charley, somewhat amazed at the indignation of Moses. "He needn't have been so awfully mad."

"Harm? Why, it was an idol, the figure of the false god of Egypt; and now, after the true God had done such wonders for them, they turn right away from Him right before that great mountain He had so lately used as His throne, and there they made an idol, and that the old idol of Egypt, where they had suffered so much, and they dance in heathenish worship before it. Moses was the meekest man of his day, but he was justly angry at such an act. Don't you think so?"

"Yes," was the one answer of the family, none shouting louder than Charley himself.

"But Moses made short work of this performance," said Grandpa. "He sprang in among the people and tumbled over the idol, smashing it to bits, and tossing the fragments into the fire; then he called for all who were on the Lord's side to join him. Joshua was there, and



He saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount."—Exodus xxxii, 19.

others too, and then they were sent to slay every one who stood up for the idol. No less than three thousand were killed that day, but Moses stamped out idolatry at Sinai."

"What excuse had the people for doing such a silly thing?" asked Carrie, who seemed quite disgusted with their folly.

"Excuse? Let Mary read that offered by Aaron for his part in the affair. Turn to Exodus xxxii, 23."

Mary read as follows: "For they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

"Why," exclaimed Carrie, "did he mean that the calf came out, as if by magic, all complete and without any person having worked on it?"

"So I understand him," replied Grandpa; "and it is one of the shallowest excuses ever made for a sin."

"So I think," said Mary, sharply. "Aaron knew better, didn't he?"

"Certainly," answered Grandpa, "but he was just like thousands of others, who do wrong things and make silly excuses for them. Many a man who becomes helplessly drunk pleads that one needs a drink for the sake of his health, or that it is a social duty to take a glass of intoxicating liquor. A thief pleads that the world owes him a living and gives the impression that he is but collecting his just dues. Now those men know very well that there is no sense in their pleas, and I quite strongly suspect that Aaron felt about the same way."

"Aaron's excuse," added Mrs. Reed, "reminds me of the belief of the people of Ephesus when Paul was there and they made a great cry against him for ruining the worship of their favorite goddess, Diana. The town clerk spoke of her image as having fallen down from Jupiter. He thought he had a good reason for worshipping that image, and Aaron meant to give a good reason for what he did. But Moses could not be duped, though the people of Ephesus were. So he smashed the new image they had made, and slew the leaders of the evil movement."

"I've made up my mind," said Charley, "that it don't pay to do wrong things. I won't go into the idol business just now. I'm too smart for that, I am."

"Too *good* for that, you'd better say, brother. I'd rather be good than smart any day," was Carrie's loving comment.

"The best way," said Mrs. Reed, "is to do as Krishnu Pal did. He had been a worshiper of idols, but was one of the first converts to Christianity. He finally wrote a hymn, which the missionaries thought so beautiful that they translated it into English. Part of it I remember :

" " O thou my soul ! forget no more
The Friend who all thy sorrows bore ;
Let every idol be forgot,
But, O my soul ! forget Him not.

" " Oh ! no ; till life itself depart,
His name shall cheer and warm my heart ;
And lisping this, from earth I'll rise,
And join the chorus of the skies. " "

" Beautiful ! " exclaimed Grandpa, and Carrie added, " That is the best way for all of us."

THE GORGEOUS TENT;

OR, WORSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS.

“DIDN'T you say, Grandpa, that when Moses was in the Mount God told him many other things besides the Ten Commandments?”

“Very likely I did; for that is the fact, Carrie. God made very careful arrangement for the worship to be rendered Him while they were journeying in the wilderness. They were moving from place to place; so a permanent house of worship would not do for them. God gave orders, therefore, for a gorgeous tent, called the Tabernacle, and of which the Bible has a great deal to say.”

“I am glad you speak of that, Grandpa, for I never understood much about that Tabernacle, nor about worship there; then, too, I sometimes think we can worship God as well in one way or in one place as in any other.”

“So we can, Mary, if we are so fixed that we must do it in one place or not at all, or in one way or not at all. But if we are free to choose a place and a way, and yet simply serve Him as may best suit ourselves rather than as may most honor Him, why, then self and not God is served. But I now speak of those services known as public worship. God does demand that we meet together at special places for special services, and in the days of Moses that place was the Tabernacle.”

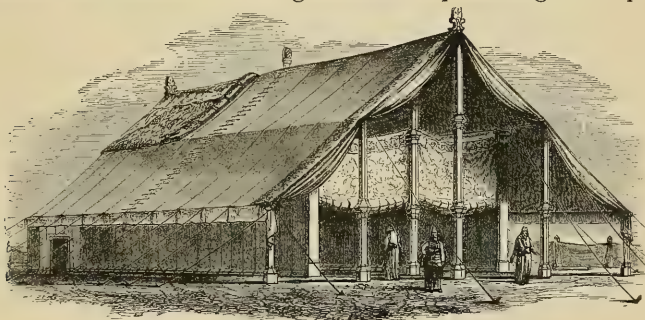
“Oh! I see,” responded Mary. “Just as we meet in our churches and Sunday-schools to publicly serve God, so they met at their Tabernacle.”

“Precisely so. And God was very particular about this matter.

He gave the most exact directions how everything should be done. Five entire chapters in the book of Exodus are filled with these, and at the end it is said, According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work."

"That was good," said Mary. "Everybody ought to obey God just that way."

"When all the work was done, Moses examined it very carefully and found all was right. Then the Tabernacle was set up with a splendid service, and over it a great cloud, representing God's pres-



PROBABLE APPEARANCE OF THE TABERNACLE

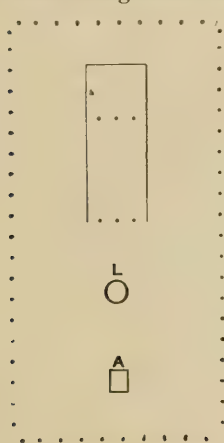
ence, came and rested; while inside the tent, in its inner room—called the Holy of Holies—a wonderful light burst forth and shone to represent God's glory."

"What did the tent look like, Grandpa? Was it like the big show tent at the fair last summer?" asked Charley.

"Not at all like that, my boy. The part strictly called the Tabernacle was a tent the sides of which were made of forty-eight upright boards set in sockets of silver. It was open at one end, where there were splendid curtains hung on pillars. For a roof, several elegant layers of curtains were used. This tent was about forty-five feet

long by fifteen wide. It was divided by a curtain or veil hung across, making an inner room fifteen feet square. This was called the Holy of Holies, the outer room being called the Holy Place. In these two rooms were the articles used in the service and prepared expressly on the orders of God."

Mrs. Reed at this moment brought out a book with a picture of the Tabernacle as it is supposed to have appeared. After looking at it and talking about it awhile, Grandpa said :



CARRIE'S PICTURE.

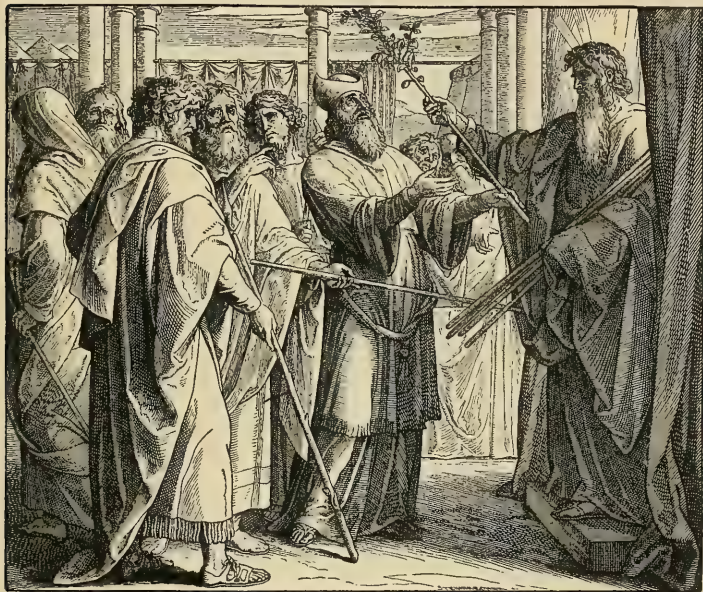
"This tent stood toward the rear of an inclosed space, which was seventy-five feet wide by one hundred and fifty long. This space was inclosed by twenty pillars on its north side, twenty on its south, and ten each at its east and west ends. These were set in brass sockets, and from pillar to pillar linen curtains hung, forming the inclosure. The curtains on the east end were far more beautiful than the others, that being the entrance. In this inclosure stood the altar, where sacrifices were offered, and the laver, where the priests washed. Into this space only priests and their helpers, the Levites, were allowed to come. Into the Holy Place priests only could come, and into the Holy of Holies the High Priest only could enter,

and he was allowed to enter but once a year."

"Grandpa, I think I know how it looked. See, I have made a picture of it; isn't this right?" asked Carrie, pushing her slate across the table to where Grandpa sat. He put on his glasses, and, scanning the picture with a smile, said, "Not much of a picture, Carrie, but a very good ground-plan."

"That's what I meant to make, not a nice picture; but isn't it right?"

"Yes, very good. Your inclosure is about twice as long as wide, which is correct; your tent is three times as long as wide; your Holy of Holies is square—all of which is correct. But what is this small square you have marked A?"



"And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord. . . . And they looked, and took every man his rod."—Numbers xvii, 9.

"The altar."

"And this circle you have marked L?"

"The laver."

"And which end is this near which they stand?"

"The east end, where the entrance was and the beautiful curtains."

"Very good. Now let me tell you how God settled the question as to who should be his High Priest. Aaron had acted as such till some of the people became dissatisfied with him. Then God ordered that for every tribe of Israel a marked rod of almond tree should be brought to Moses. Aaron's name was to be on the rod of Levi's tribe. These rods Moses laid up in the Holy Place, God having said that the rod of the man He chose should blossom. The next day Moses went in, and behold, Aaron's rod was full of blossoms and almonds. Then Moses brought out the rods that all might see for themselves, after which Aaron's rod was kept in the Holy Place as a token of his authority and as a rebuke to all complainers."

"Well, I think that ought to have settled the question as to whom God preferred," said Mary.

"Aaron must have felt all right," added Charley, "but I pity the other chaps."

"How did they offer the sacrifices?" asked Mary. "I'm not sure that I know just how it was done."

"You will find all about them in the opening chapters of the book of Leviticus," answered Grandpa. "As you will there see, the process was about this. A person brought the bullock or lamb, as the case might be, to the door of the inclosure, where the priests and Levites took charge of it, the man first laying his hand upon the head of the animal and confessing his sins. Then the animal was led to the altar and killed by the Levites. Its blood was caught in a basin, and some of it was sprinkled on the altar. Then the body was cut up, and part of it or all of it, as the nature of the offering might require, was burned on the altar.

"That was very odd. Why was that required?" asked Carrie.

"To teach that without the shedding of blood, or the giving of a life, sin could not be forgiven. By this oft-repeated lesson at the Tabernacle and the Temple men were prepared to welcome Christ, who died once for all for the sins of men."

LIFE FOR A LOOK;
OR, THOUSANDS CURED THOUGH FATALLY BITTEN.

"GRANDPA," began Charley, "why don't God do wonderful things now, like He did for Moses, and make everybody serve Him?"

"Everybody did not serve Him, Charley; nor would everybody serve Him now, even though He should do the very same wonders. God does not wish to startle us with wonderful acts, but rather to draw us with loving acts. His love is clearer now than His power was in the days of Moses."

"But they all had to confess then that God watched over and blessed them," said Mary.

"No, dear; they did not. Hardly had that rod blossomed, of which I told you last night, when the people began to speak against both God and Moses. Their complaint was that the way was rough and hard to travel. Then God sent among them immense numbers of fiery serpents, which bit many people, and great numbers died."

"Ugh!" cried Carrie, with a shudder. "I'd have died at the sight of them without waiting for the bite."

"Why were they fiery serpents?" asked Charley. "When we had fireworks on the Fourth of July we had chasers that some people called fiery serpents. Were they the chaps?"

"No, my boy. Real snakes were among the people. Why they are called *fiery* is not positively known. They may have had a reddish, glowing appearance, or the bitten part may have become very red and hot, as if touched by fire."

"It makes me shiver to hear about them," said Carrie.

"No doubt many of the Israelites felt as much horror of snakes as you do; but the snakes came all the same, and on every side men, women, and children were dying. Then the people came to Moses, full of confessions, and begging him to pray for them. He did it, and God told him to make a serpent of brass, to set it up on a pole, and that every bitten person who looked to that serpent of brass should live."

"God was certainly good to deal so kindly with such people!" exclaimed Mary.

"And did the people get cured that way?" asked Charley.

"Yes; every one that looked to the brazen serpent lived. No matter how badly bitten, no matter how far gone with the terrible poison, no matter from how distant a place he looked, the record is, When he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

"I wish there was a serpent now, that sick people might look and get well," said Carrie.

"The children of Israel kept that brazen serpent some seven hundred years, but it did them so much harm that the good King Hezekiah broke it up."

"Why, Grandpa, how could it do them harm?" exclaimed all at once.

"Turn to II Kings xviii, 4, and see," said he, smiling. Mary turned as directed and read:

"He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan."

"Why did they burn incense to it?" asked Carrie. "I don't see any good in that."

"They worshiped it, and in their worship burned incense as part of the ceremony. Because they did this Hezekiah spoke of it contemptuously, and called it Nehushtan."

"That's a queer name to call it, anyway," said Carrie.



THE MARVELOUS SERPENT.

"Called it *Necushtan*," said Charley, slowly. "That was a hard name to call it. What is *Necushtan*?"

"*Nehushtan*, not *Necushtan*," said Mary, correcting the slip of Charley's tongue.

"Well, what does it mean, anyhow? If it's a good one, I'll call the boys that."

"*Nehushtan* means an old piece of brass, a brazen thing. It was an expression of contempt because of the evil uses to which the serpent had been put."

"Yes, they made an idol of it, Grandpa. But then they needn't have done that; so I still wish we had something like it to make sick people well," persisted Carrie.

"We have something far better," added Grandpa.

"Better? I should like to know what."

"Read John iii, 14, 15, Mary, and you will see."

Mary read: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

"Yes, that is better," said Carrie, thoughtfully. "And do we need simply to look to Jesus as they did to the serpent?"

"That is what Jesus says. There is life for a look at the crucified One, as the hymn has it. So let us all look."

"But how can we look, Grandpa? Not with our eyes, as I look to you, can we?" asked Carrie.

"No, darling, because we cannot see Jesus with our natural eyes. But to whom do you look for money to pay your school-bills?"

"To papa, of course; he always sends that," answered Carrie. "But," added she, with light breaking over her face, "I don't look to him with my eyes when he's away so far, do I?"

"No, dear," answered Grandpa; "you look with your mind and your heart, and your papa does not disappoint you. That is the way to look for pardon from Jesus."

"Oh! I see," exclaimed the girl; "and I'll try to do just that."

FORTY YEARS A GENERAL;

OR, SURRENDERING A GREAT COMMISSION.

"HOW many years did Moses lead the children of Israel, Grandpa?" asked Carrie, when the family was once more seated after tea.

"Moses was forty years old when he fled to the land of Midian, eighty years old when he led the Israelites out of Egypt, and one hundred and twenty years old when he died."

"Whew!" exclaimed Charley, with a prolonging of sound as if he would make it last as long as the life of Moses. "He was a good old gent. Why, he was old enough to be your grandfather, wasn't he, Grandpa? He was General forty years."

"Yes, and good enough to be an honor to any grandson."

"Just like you," broke in Carrie.

"Thanks, darling," responded Grandpa, with a loving smile. "But as Moses grew old he was sensible enough to know it, and to see that Israel needed a younger man to lead them; so he took the matter to God in prayer, just as he should have done, and God told him whom to appoint. And whom, suppose you, the chosen man was?"

"Aaron," said Carrie.

"No; Aaron was three years older than Moses, and hence hardly the man. What is worse, Aaron was then dead."

"Joshua!" shouted Charley; "he was a tip-top old soldier. He was alive, and he knew how to fight."

"Correct. Joshua could fight as a General, and he was also good and true. A better leader there could not be for any people. So God said, Take thee Joshua, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay

thine hand upon him. This was done, and Eleazar, who had become High Priest in Aaron's place, became special adviser to the new leader. Moses did not die at once, but he put honor and responsibility on Joshua to accustom him to his coming duties, and so taught and prepared him for what he had to do."



"He took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation. And he laid his hands on him, and gave him a charge."—Numbers xxvii, 22, 23.

"That was noble, wasn't it?" said Mary. "It's a pity such grand men have to die."

"It does seem so, but his work was done. He would have failed in strength and become less grand had he lived much longer. God

gave Moses a most honorable removal from earth. The people he had led so long had come to the borders of Canaan, their land of promise, and were about to enter into it. Then God called Moses up into one of the lofty mountains lying east of the Jordan River, led him up to the very top of Mount Pisgah, and from that lofty height showed him all the land the Israelites were so soon to hold. It was a magnificent outlook for the venerable man who had so long toiled to bring them there. Then Moses died there, and God buried him, but just where was never told. No man knoweth his sepulchre. Israel mourned for him long and sincerely, as well they might; but his body rested where God had laid it, and his soul was with God, whom he had served so long. Thus he laid down his great commission."

"Let me read just here Mrs. Alexander's exquisite poem, The Burial of Moses. It has long seemed to me one of the most beautiful of compositions." So saying, Mrs. Reed proceeded as follows:

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man dug that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the tramping,
Or saw the train go forth;
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes when the night is done,
And the crimson streak on the ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun:

Noiselessly as the spring-time
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Open their thousand leaves;

So, without sound of music,
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle
On gray Beth-peor's height,
Out of his rocky eyrie
Looked on the wondrous sight.
Perchance the lion, stalking,
Still shuns the hallowed spot—
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

Lo! when the warrior dieth,
His comrades in the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drum,
Follow the funeral car.
They show the banners taken,
They tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed,
While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
 Men lay the sage to rest,
 And give the bard an honored place,
 With costly marble dressed;
 In the great minster transept,
 Where lights like glories fall,
 And the choir sings and the organ rings
 Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the bravest warrior
 That ever buckled sword—
 This the most gifted poet
 That ever breathed a word;
 And never earth's philosopher
 Traced, with his golden pen,
 On the deathless page truths half so sage
 As *he* wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?
 The hillside for his pall,
 To lie in state while angels wait,
 With stars for tapers tall;

And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave;
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
 To lay him in the grave.

In that deep grave without a name,
 Whence his uncoffined clay
 Shall break again—O wondrous thought!—
 Before the judgment day;
 And stand, with glory wrapped around,
 On the hills he never trod,
 And speak of the strife that won our life
 With the incarnate Son of God.

O lonely tomb in Moab's land!
 O dark Beth-peor's hill!
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God hath His mysteries of grace—
 Ways that we cannot tell;
 He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
 Of him He loved so well.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed both girls; then, after a moment's silence, Charley asked, "What did Joshua do after that?"

"God came to Joshua, after Moses died, and encouraged him with the best of promises. There Joshua went at his work and led the people into Canaan. There they had many enemies to conquer, but Joshua was not afraid. One day he went to reconnoitre, as soldiers call it—that is, to look around and spy out the situation of the enemy. While thus occupied alone, and far from his own men, suddenly an armed soldier stood before him with his sword drawn. Maybe he wished to try whether Joshua would scare easily, but there was no scare in him. Joshua advanced upon him instantly and asked, Art thou for us or for our adversaries?"

"Good for Joshua!" exclaimed Charley; "he's the boy for me. What did the man say?"

"He said he was the captain of the Lord's host—meaning that he was a messenger from God, probably the Captain of our salvation,

the Lord Himself. Then Joshua fell upon the ground and worshiped his visitor, who told him how to capture Jericho, and then left."

"Joshua ought to have stood firm and fought well after such a visit," was Mary's comment; to which Charley added "That's so!"



"There stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua . . . said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"—Joshua v, 13.

Grandpa, rising from his chair, reminded them that the same great Captain has said, "Lo, I am with *you* always, or all the days," as His exact words were; and said, as he left the room, "We, too, ought to stand firm and be good soldiers for the Lord."

"We'll do it," was the children's parting call.

WATER HEAPED UP; OR, THE WONDERFUL CROSSING.

"**L**AST night, Grandpa," began Carrie, "you said Joshua led the children of Israel into Canaan. But they were on the other side of the Jordan, and wasn't it a big river? How did he get them across?"

"Sure enough, my child. How did he? Jordan is a deep, rapid river at the season when they crossed. It then overfloweth all its banks, as the Bible record says. There was no bridge, nor had they any boats, but an immense number of men, women, and children, with live stock and goods, had to cross. How could it be done?"

"Swim 'em," answered Charley, with the promptness of an old commander; "swim 'em. There's no better way to cross rivers."

"How absurd!" exclaimed Carrie. "Even if all the men could swim, which I doubt, for they had not been much about the water; but even if they could, imagine thousands of women and children and babies swimming across with all their goods. They'd have a job of it, and lots of them would be drowned."

"Jess so," answered the boy, with a laugh. "Jess so, and that's where the fun would come in."

"What other way was possible?" asked Grandpa. "How else could the crossing be made?"

"As it was done at the Red Sea," said Mary. "I don't know how else it could be done."

"That was the chosen way. God gave orders that the priests should take up the ark of the covenant and, with it on their shoulders, that they should march directly into the water. They started, but no sooner did their feet reach the brink of the river than the



THE WATERS ROLLING BACK.

water rolled back and stood in a heap above them, while below it flowed away and left the river-bottom bare and dry, so that the people crossed right over without so much as wetting their feet. While they were passing the priests stood in the middle of the river with the ark, the waters rising behind them like a great wall."

"O Grandpa! how could that be?" asked Carrie, as if in doubt whether he really was serious in what he said.

"How? my child. Why, it could not be at all if God kept on in His usual way, making water run down-hill, as we always see it. But He has power enough and skill enough to make it run up-hill as well as down, or stand in a heap as readily as flow. God certainly can do such acts. The only question is, Will He?"

"But why did He do it then?" persisted Carrie.

"He meant to honor Joshua by enabling him to lead the people into Canaan. There was no other way to do it save this. But in this way it would be done safely and quickly. None of the Israelites could doubt the power that brought them into the land, and they might feel sure that the same power would protect them when there."

"What would the people who lived in Canaan think of such an entrance into their land?" asked Mary.

"It would certainly impress them very strongly. To see such an immense company cross the swollen river in a few minutes would amaze and terrify them."

"And how would the people who crossed feel?" asked Charley.

"Well, God wished them to remember this great crossing; so He told Joshua to select one man from each tribe, and these should each take up a stone from the very centre of the river-bed, where the priests had stood with the ark. These stones they were to carry out to the Canaan shore and there pile them up as a memorial monument. This was done, and in the years which followed many a passer-by gazed on this monument and asked what it meant. Then the story of the wonderful crossing would be told and re-told, to the honor of God and the comfort of His people."



BRINGING OUT THE MEMORIAL STONES.

VICTORY AND DEFEAT:

OR, WHY THEY CONQUERED AND HOW THEY FLED.

"I HAVE been wondering, Grandpa," began Mary, "how the people of Canaan liked to have so many Israelites come into their land."

"They did not like it at all. They were greatly afraid and planned how they might drive out the intruders. Near where the crossing was made was a great city called Jericho. This was at once shut against the newcomers, its gates being closed tight, so that no one could go out or come in. But God gave that city to Joshua in a very strange way. There was no attack made upon it, nor any battle in front of it, but for six successive days the Israelites marched around the city, the priests leading and carrying the ark of the Lord. On the seventh day they varied their programme by marching around the city seven times; at the end of the seventh round the priests blew their trumpets and all the people shouted."

"What good would that do?" asked Charley. "Did they expect to scare the people by yelling at them?"

"The Lord told them to do it. Do it they did, and in an instant down tumbled the great walls and towers of the city, leaving Jericho a total ruin. With the falling walls most of their soldiers must have been killed. They would naturally crowd to the tops of the walls and the towers to see the marching outside and to resist attack, if it should be made. When these walls fell so suddenly and so unexpectedly they had no chance to escape. They must have been crushed and mangled in great heaps, and the city became the easy prey of the Israelites."

"Well, well!" cried Mary. "That was an amazing victory."

"Yes; but it had in it the seeds of defeat." God had said that all the goods of the city should be set apart for Him. The soldiers knew this, and had they been obedient all would have been well.



*"It came to pass when . . . the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat."—
Joshua vi, 20.*

But one man kept for himself some valuable stuff that he found. No other fellow-soldier knew it; but God saw it and sent trouble because of it. There was another city called Ai, and Joshua next went up against it. He thought to take it with just a few men; but his men completely failed, and they were chased in disgrace from

the walls. Then Joshua was in distress; he wept and prayed, until God told him the cause of the trouble and how to detect the man who had done the wrong."

"Why didn't God punish the man?" asked Charley.

"Yes; but He wanted to impress the people, so that every one of them should feel concern in the case. So He ordered that all the tribes should come, one by one, before Him. They came, and He took the tribe of Judah; then all the families of this tribe came, and He took that of Zerah; then this family came by its households, and He took the household of Zabdi; then the men of this household came, man by man, and He took Achan. The guilty man was hunted down in this deliberate and impressive way."

"My!" exclaimed Carrie. "They must have felt awfully as this search went on. And how must Achan have felt!"

"Badly enough, I am sure," said Grandpa. "He confessed all that he had done; that he had stolen at Jericho a splendid robe and a lot of silver and gold, all of which he had buried in his tent."

"How could he do that and his family not know it?" asked Carrie.

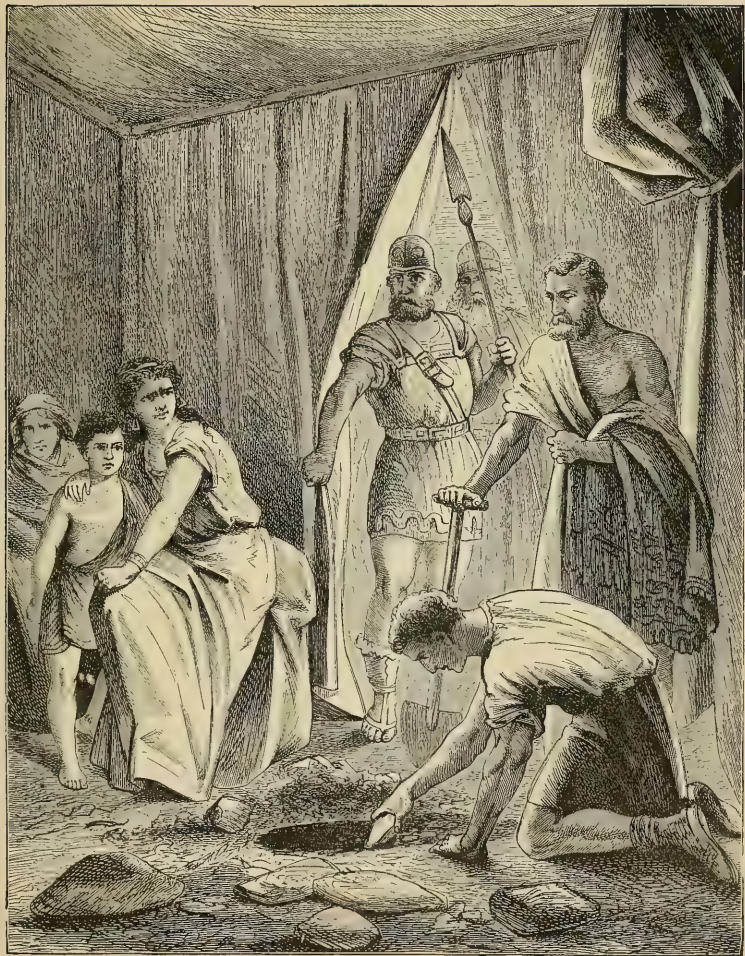
"They did know it, but they concealed it—though they knew it was a great sin. Joshua then sent messengers to Achan's tent, and there they found the buried treasures—just as Achan had said."

"Oh, my!" sighed Carrie; "what did they do with poor Achan?"

"Achan, with all his property and his family, was led out into a valley near by. He and his people were then stoned to death and their bodies, with all the property, were burned. That was the terrific manner in which God punished the theft of goods which had been set apart for Him."

"That was awful!" said Mary; "but it does seem that they deserved it."

"It does," assented Grandpa. "When this had been done, God sent Joshua once more against Ai, and he captured it easily. So we see that victory follows obedience, while disobedience and defeat go hand in hand."



FINDING THE STOLEN TREASURE.

DIVIDING THE INHERITANCE; OR, REALIZING A GREAT POSSESSION.

"**W**AS Joshua's trouble over when Ai was conquered?" asked Mary, taking up the thread of the last night's conversation. "It seems to me it was about time for him to find some rest."

"By no means, my dear," her Grandpa replied—"by no means. One of his greatest battles was with the soldiers of no less than five kings, who combined to help each other against him. But Joshua moved quickly, forced his marches, and came upon them quite unexpectedly at Gibeon. He soon put them to flight, and as they ran a terrible hail-storm came up and so pelted the fleeing men that many of them were actually beaten to death. Still Joshua pursued. Night was coming on, so he commanded the sinking sun to stand still where it was that daylight might last and the enemy be completely destroyed. God heard that command of Joshua; the sun did stand still; the day was prolonged; and the armies of the kings were utterly cut to pieces."

"Served them right," muttered Charley. "They had no business to trouble Joshua."

"The kings themselves ran off together and hid in a cave; but Joshua heard of it and sent men to roll great stones against its mouth, and so shut them in. When the battle was over, Joshua and his men went to the cave and opened it, when out crawled the royal runaways. After humbling them before his soldiers, Joshua ordered them to be slain, and their bodies to be hung upon five separate trees."

"Poor fellows! That ended their fight with Joshua," said Mary, sympathetically, Charley adding, "I guess that took the fight out of them." Grandpa then went on:

"Yes, but other enemies came. Joshua met and conquered all



"Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave."—Joshua x, 22.

who came, but he grew old before the work was done or the land was in the peaceful possession of his followers. So the Lord told him to divide up the land, giving each tribe a part, and then to conquer it for its owners. Part of the tribes had already received land on the east side of the Jordan, but all on its west side was divided

among the others by lot, that being the fairest way of settling where each should live."

"How did they do it *by lot*, as you say, Grandpa?"

"Why, Charley, descriptions of the various parts of the land were written on slips of parchment. These were all put into a jar, held probably by a little child, and where Joshua and the High Priest could see that everything was fairly done. Then a leader of each tribe came and drew out a roll. The land described on that roll was the property of the tribe for which it was drawn. In this way the long-promised inheritance was divided; the Israelites realized their great possession in Canaan."

"This was what God promised to Abraham, wasn't it?" asked Carrie.

"Yes; what God had promised, more than five hundred years before Joshua divided the land, came to pass. God is in no hurry, you know; all the centuries are His. If He does not do His great works now, He may do them a hundred or a thousand years hence; but what He promises He will certainly bring to pass."

"The people must have been glad to get settled after so much moving around," remarked Carrie.

"They never knew what it was to be settled till then, did they, Grandpa?" said Mary.

"No, Mary; and even then their troubles were not over, for while the land was divided, they needed to drive out the people who held it and to hold it themselves."

"But didn't the Lord give them all that land?" asked Carrie, seemingly confused at the delay in getting full possession.

"God's promise to Joshua was, Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. If they did not occupy or conquer the land it was not theirs."

"Did they do it?" asked the boy, who ever looked at the practical results.

"Never entirely. They contented themselves by settling as best they could on the land they then possessed. What they had not then conquered they allowed to old inhabitants to hold. So the Lord's people settled down with their heathen neighbors, and both seemed



"By lot was their inheritance, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."—Joshua xiv, 2.

willing to let each other alone. In this way the Israelites never took what the Lord offered them, and what they might have taken had they been active and bold."

"That's the way we all suffer, more or less," said Mrs. Reed. "The Lord gives each of us opportunities far better than we use."

STRENGTH TURNED TO WEAKNESS;

OR, HOW THE MIGHTY FELL.

"GRANDPA, didn't Samson live when Moses and Joshua did?" Charley, who regarded Samson as the hero of heroes, proposed this question, seeming to fear that he would be overlooked in the attention bestowed on other men.

"Not exactly, Charley," answered Grandpa. "He lived some three hundred years after Joshua."

"Was it so long?" replied the boy. "Well, couldn't you tell us about him? He was such a tremendous fellow, I always like him."

"Just as you wish. Samson was one of the Judges of Israel. In all there were fifteen leaders who held this office, Samuel being the last, and Samson being but two ahead of him. When Samson was born, the children of Israel were in great distress on account of their surrounding enemies, especially of the Philistines, who lived on the seacoast to the southeast of Canaan. God evidently thought that a man of prodigious strength and courage would do them good as a leader, so He raised up this matchless man, whose strength is ascribed directly to God's power. It is said in Judges xiii, 25, that at times the Spirit of the Lord began to move him."

"Move him how?" asked Carrie.

"Move him to do great and wonderful deeds, but what they were is not told us."

"Why are not all his doings told us, Grandpa?" inquired Charley.

"It seems to me we ought to have a whole book on Samson."

"That might be more interesting than profitable," answered Mary.

"There are enough dime novels, without trying to turn Bible

heroes into their heroes. But, Grandpa, please tell us what we do know about Samson, for he was a tremendous man."

"Yes, do," shouted Charley. "Please go on."

"Very willingly," answered Grandpa, "for God raised him up to do



"And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee."—Ruth i, 15, 16.

to serve the true God, and to live and die with her people, then Naomi urged no more, but the two journeyed lovingly on to Bethlehem, where Naomi had lived before she went to Moab."

"Good for them!" shouted Charley.

"When they arrived there was a great stir among the kind peo

"How could he, Grandpa?" exclaimed Carrie. "Why, lions are so big and so strong."

"But how strong was Samson? He may have been stronger than the strongest lion. And then the Bible says it was a *young* lion, which may mean that it was not an immense, full-grown fellow; but big or little, it was a wonderful thing for Samson to kill it as he did."

"It was something for him to talk about, wasn't it?" exclaimed Charley, moving his hands as if to tear some imaginary lion to pieces.

"Yes, but he didn't talk about it. Even his father and mother did not know of it, and when, finally, he did tell it, he made it into a riddle for people to guess, because none knew what he had done. So we see that Samson was no boaster. He did much and talked little, which is by far the better way."

"Tell us some other thing he did. I love to hear about him," said Charley, earnestly.

"At another time," continued Grandpa, "three thousand of his own people came to bind him and hand him over to the Philistines. After Samson had made them promise not to harm him themselves, he allowed them to bind him with new cords and lead him away to the Philistines. When they saw him coming, bound and seemingly helpless, they raised a great shout. Then God strengthened Samson again, and he snapped the cords as if they had been burnt off; then, seizing a big jaw-bone of an ass that lay near him, he rushed upon the Philistines, striking right and left, and before he quit a thousand men lay battered and dead upon the ground."

"Hoorah for Samson!" shouted Charley, flinging his own arms about as if himself smiting down Philistines.

"That was very grand," continued Grandpa, "and had Samson remained faithful to God, all would have been well. But he kept bad company; he associated with low, base people, and such are sure to ruin any man. One of his most intimate friends was a woman named Delilah. She was a worthless creature, who bargained with

the Philistines that she would betray Samson into their hands. She pretended to love him very tenderly, and so coaxed him to tell her why he was so strong. Instead of plumply refusing her, he made a false statement, telling her that if they should bind him with seven green withs he would be weak as any other man. While he lay asleep one day she bound him with seven withs and then called, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson! Up he started at that cry and snapped the withs as though they had been mere threads."

"Good!" exclaimed Charley. "Next he ought to have switched Delilah with one of the withs."

"But he did not, Charley. She pretended to be terribly grieved because Samson had deceived her, so she coaxed him up again, and he told her that new ropes would bind him. She tried this at her next good chance, but in vain. He snapped the new ropes with perfect ease, and was free. But Delilah did not give up. She wanted to get the pay the Philistines offered for the capture of Samson; so she coaxed him again, and he said, if they would weave his hair into the web of a loom he would be helpless. She did it, but off he marched with the beam of the loom hanging to his hair. After that he told her all the truth, for she pestered him almost to death."

"And what was the secret of his strength?" asked Mary.

"Simply that he was dedicated unto God, and that in token of it his hair had never been cut. To cut his hair would be to cancel his vow—to signify that he was no more the Lord's, just as to cut off a Chinaman's queue indicates that he is no more a Chinaman. This Samson told Delilah, and when next she caught him asleep she cut his hair, and God forsook him as he forsook God. Then the Philistines took him prisoner, put out his eyes, and threw him into prison, where they harnessed him to a mill and made him grind like a beast of burden."

"Poor, Samson!" sighed Carrie. "How sorry he must have been!"

"He was sorry," added Grandpa, "and in his sorrow he went to God. His hair grew again, and as it grew he gave himself again to

God, and his strength returned. One day the Philistines were having a great festival in their Temple. To make things lively they sent for Samson, who was led in by a small boy. Samson asked to be placed between the two great pillars of the house, that he might lean



"And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein."—Judges xvi, 30.

upon them. He was put there. Then he prayed for his old strength, and God answered the prayer. Then Samson bowed himself with all his might; the pillars broke, and down came the overloaded house with a terrific crash, killing Samson himself and all that were about him. So at his death he killed more than in all his life."

UNDYING DEVOTION; OR, TWO LOVING HEARTS.

“**P**OSSIBLY you may think,” began Grandpa, “that all the good people of the Bible are men or boys.”

“I was wondering about that,” answered Mary; “for we have hardly talked of any women except Delilah and a few others I did not like.”

“Well, I will tell you to-night about a most lovely character—Ruth. Her home was away off to the east of Canaan, in the land of Moab. To that land a family from Canaan came—a man, his wife, and their two sons. One of these sons met Ruth and finally married her; the other son married another Moabite girl named Orpah, and for some ten years they all lived happily together. Then sorrow came; the father died and both the sons died, so that Naomi, the mother, and the two young Moabite women were left widowed and poor.”

“Oh! my,” sighed sympathetic Carrie. “It seems to me everybody has trouble.”

“Yes, Carrie; we are born to trouble.

‘Into each life some rain must fall—
Some days must be dark and dreary,’

as Longfellow says. After a while Naomi heard that there were better times in Canaan, her old home, and she resolved to go back there, and her daughters-in-law started with her. As they set out, Naomi thought of all they were leaving and urged them to go back to their own mothers; not that she did not love them and wish for

their company, but she wanted them to feel entirely free to leave her if they so desired."

"That was good and kind in her, wasn't it?" said Mary. "She had to walk all the way and to go alone, too, hadn't she?"

"Yes; she had several hundred miles to go, and there were many hardships and dangers in the way, so she would willingly spare Ruth and Orpah the toil and the peril and go alone."

"But what did they do? It must have been hard to choose; but it seems to me," said Carrie, "I would have stayed with my mother."

"So Orpah thought; for though, when Naomi kissed them good-bye and wept over them, they both said, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people, yet when Naomi further urged them to act carefully in the matter, Orpah kissed her farewell and went back. But Ruth clave to Naomi. Then said Naomi to Ruth, Behold, thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law."

"Why did she talk about her gods?" asked Charley. "There is just one God, isn't there?"

"Yes; but the Moabites were idolaters. They had many gods and idols which they worshiped, and they did not know the only true God, whom we worship."

"Did Ruth go back this time?" asked Carrie. "It seems to me she might have wondered whether Naomi really wanted her company."

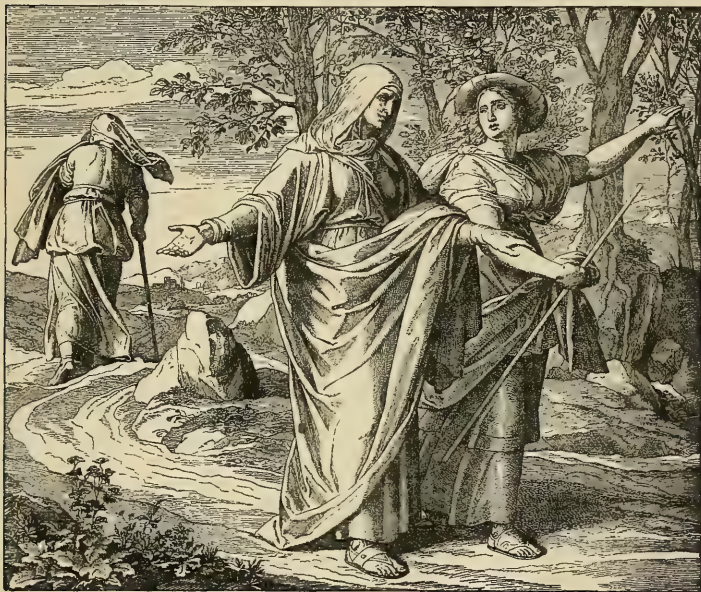
"Ruth was not one of the suspicious kind, always looking out for slights and offenses. She knew Naomi loved her, and Naomi's last words called forth from Ruth one of the sweetest replies which ever fell from human lips. Mary may read it from Ruth i, 16, 17."

Mary turned to the place and, while Carrie looked over her shoulder, she read: "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I

be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

"How lovely!" exclaimed Carrie, as Mary ceased.

"When Naomi saw that Ruth was decided to keep her company,



"He found a new jaw-bone of an ass and put forth his hand and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith."—Judges xv, 15.

a special work. His first great act of which we know occurred when, with his father and mother, he was going to claim his bride at Tim-nath, a city of the Philistines. He was walking apart from his parents when a young lion met him. He had no weapon with him, but he seized the brute and tore it to pieces as though it had been a kid."

ple of Bethlehem. They were grieved to learn how sadly Naomi had been bereaved, and how she herself had failed; she, too, was all broken up with the memories of what she had passed through. I went out full, she sobbed, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty."

"Poor thing!" said Carrie, wiping away her own tears. "I don't wonder she was broken-hearted. She had cause to be."

"When they reached Bethlehem it was just the time of barley harvest. Rich farmers there allowed poor people to follow the reapers and pick up for themselves, or glean, the little bunches of grain which fell by the way. Ruth was no idler; so she went out to glean, and it chanced that she entered the field of a noble and good man named Boaz. As she worked along, Boaz himself came near. She was so pretty, so modest, and yet seemed so sad, that Boaz asked who she was. When told, he became greatly interested. He had heard how Ruth had come from Moab with Naomi and how good she was; so he talked very kindly to her and invited her to dinner at his house. He also told the young men to drop plenty of barley near her that she might find an abundance to gather up. Ruth did well that day and Naomi was greatly pleased. Ruth worked on in this way till the end of harvest. Boaz saw her often, and it was not long till he bought back all the land which once belonged to her husband and to his father, and then what think you he did?"

"Married her!" was the happy guess of all at once.

"Yes—married her, and gave her and Naomi a good home and made them very happy. Ruth's great-grandson was the famous King David, and Jesus Himself was one of her descendants. So she became honored and happy because she chose to serve the true God and to live among His people."

"She wasn't like old Lot—she wasn't," said the boy.

"No. But what became of Orpah?" asked Carrie.

"Nobody knows. We never again hear of her."



ANCIENT ISRAELITES BLESSING THEIR EVENING MEAL.

BRAVE DEEDS OF A SHEPHERD BOY;

OR, FIT TO BECOME A KING.

"GRANDPA," began Charley, "you spoke last night of David. Tell us about him to-night, please. He's just splendid."

"He began splendidly," answered Grandpa. "He was a brave and noble boy, and such boys are fit to become kings."

"Tell us what he did when a boy, Grandpa," said Carrie. "I like to hear about boys—that is, boys who have grown up to be good men."

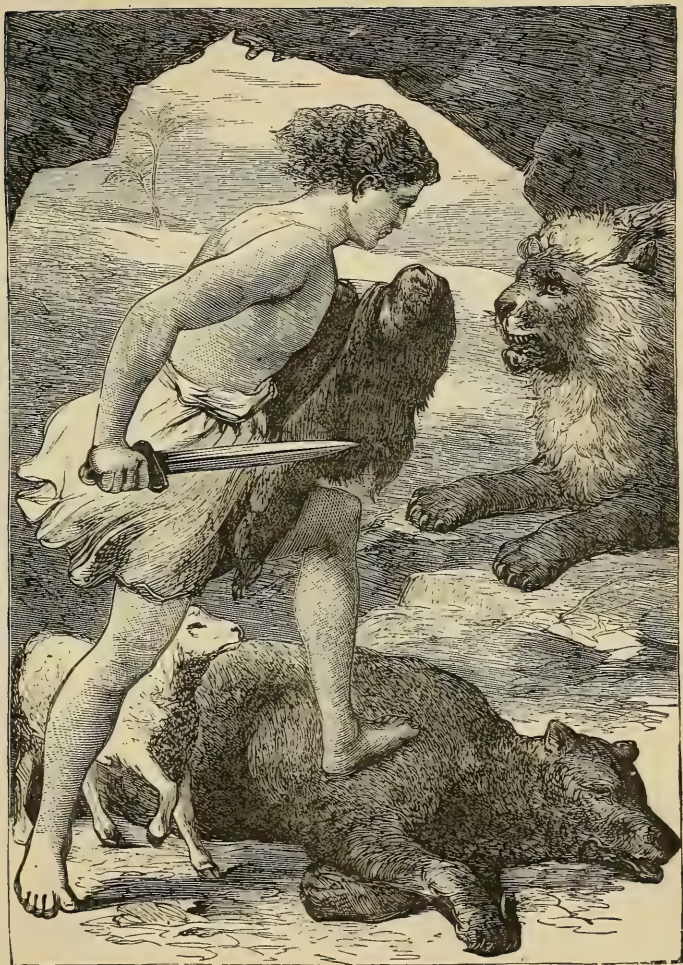
"Or boys who may grow up to be good men," answered Grandpa, pleasantly. "Well, Carrie, dear, when David was a boy he watched his father's sheep. One day he missed a lamb, and on looking for traces of it he discovered tracks of two great beasts. Examining closely, he found that a lion and a bear had both been among the sheep and had carried off this lamb. Instead of running away, as most boys would have done, he caught up the sword and shield he had to defend himself with in case of danger and off he started on the trail of these wild beasts. Soon he came to a cave, into which they had gone, and into which he plunged, sword in hand. A moment more, and both bear and lion lay dead, and the lamb was delivered out of their very mouths."

"Hadn't they killed it?" asked Charley, in surprise.

"It seems not. They had caught it as a cat catches its kittens and as lions and bears catch their cubs, and so had carried it by the loose skin of its back without doing it serious harm."

"Good boy!" shouted Charley.

"But the boy was too good to claim for himself the credit of this



THE BRAVE SHEPHERD BOY.

great deed. When he told of it to King Saul, he gave God all the praise. It was God, not David, who did it. This success made him feel sure of God's help, and because he was sure of it he was not afraid to fight the great giant Goliath."

"Oh! yes, Goliath! Tell us about him," cried Charley.

"Well," said Grandpa, good-naturedly yielding, "the Philistines and the Israelites were at war, and David's brothers were in the army. One day David went to take them some food, and while there he saw the great, boastful, swaggering, giant soldier of the Philistines. He was about nine feet high, very stout and strong, and so skillful as a fighter that no man dared to meet him in battle. So Goliath used to walk along near to the soldiers of Israel and dare them to come out and fight him. David heard these defiant, insulting remarks of the giant, and he was very indignant. He heard, too, that King Saul had promised high honors to any one who would kill the giant. So David, mere boy that he was, offered to go himself and fight Goliath. His brothers ridiculed him, but Saul heard what he had said and sent for him."

"Hey! that was good!" cried Charley. "The boy who kept sheep sent for to see a King! I'd like to see a real King."

"And the King was pleased with the boy—so pleased, indeed, that he allowed David to go and fight Goliath while both armies stood and looked on. Saul wanted to give David armor such as the soldiers wore and a sword, but he was not used to these; so off he scampered to a brook near by, where he selected a lot of smooth stones such as he was accustomed to throw from his sling. With his shepherd's staff and his sling, the stones being in his shepherd's bag at his side, he went to meet the giant, who raged and swore at the idea of a boy with a stick and a bag of stones coming against him, as though he were a dog."

"I'll bet he was mad. Go in, David!" shouted Charley.

"David did go in and kept cool, too. When near enough, he shouted that he came in the name of the Lord of hosts, who would



GATHERING AMMUNITION FROM THE BROOK.

surely smite the Philistines that day. Then the giant started for David and David started for him. Everybody expected to see the boy crushed in a moment; but see! he draws a stone from his bag and quietly puts it into his sling; he whirls the sling till it hums, and then lets fly the stone as if it were a bullet from a gun. But Goliath had metal armor all over him, except that his eyes were uncovered. David aimed at one of these openings, and into it the stone crashed, sinking through the eye and into the brain."

"Good shot! good shot!" exclaimed the boy, fairly squirming with delight; "hit him again!"

"No; David did not need to hit him again. It is no fun to have an eye knocked out; but when a stone knocks an eye out, fractures the skull, and sinks into the brain, the man struck has about enough."

"So I should think," added Mary. "How did Goliath stand this blow?"

"Down he tumbled like a great log, knocked senseless by the stone from David's sling. But David ran to him and whipped out the giant's sword, and with it hacked off the monster's head in the presence of the soldiers of both armies. Then the Philistines were scared, and away they ran, the Israelites pursuing, until they completely cut to pieces their saucy foes."

"Ha! I tell you!" exclaimed the boy; "that's the best yet. I knew David was one of them. He's fit to be a king sure enough. Hoorah for him! What did he do with the old fellow's head and fixin's?"

"They were kept as trophies of the victory. The head at Jerusalem, and the sword in the sacred tent with the holy things. Once afterward David borrowed that sword to defend himself against Saul; but what then became of it, we do not know."

The girls were not quite so demonstrative as Charley, but David had evidently become a hero with them, and they urged Grandpa to tell more of his marvelous exploits; but company was announced and the subject was laid over for the night.



THE GHASTLY TROPHY

A RUGGED WAY TO THE THRONE;

OR, PATIENCE AND FORBEARANCE REWARDED.

“HOW did David come to be King, Grandpa?” asked Mary.
“Saul was King, and I should think his sons would come to the throne, rather than David.”

“Before David killed Goliath Saul had so disobeyed God that God rejected him and sent Samuel, the great prophet and Judge of Israel, to anoint as King another person—the son of a man named Jesse, who lived at Bethlehem. When Samuel reached the place, one after another of Jesse’s sons was called. Several of them were such fine-looking fellows that Samuel was certain, as each of them appeared, that he must be the chosen man. But no. The Lord was not seeking a man for his looks; so the seven older sons of Jesse came in turn and were all rejected. Then Samuel asked if there was not another. There was another—a mere boy with a pretty face and a ruddy complexion. He was keeping the sheep, and it was not thought worth while to call him. But Samuel said, Send for him. He came, and no sooner did he enter than the Lord said to Samuel, Arise, anoint him; for this is he. It was David, our brave shepherd boy.”

“Oh, ho!” exclaimed Mary. “So he knew he was to be King when he fought Goliath, did he?”

“Certainly,” answered Grandpa; “and he believed God and acted like a king. After Goliath was killed Saul took David home to his palace. But here a new trouble arose. Saul’s son, Jonathan, loved David so much, and so did all the people, that Saul became fearfully jealous and tried to kill David, so that he had to leave the palace.

Saul probably knew that David was to succeed him as King; so he hunted him everywhere and did his best to kill him."

"Why didn't David turn around and kill Saul?" asked Charley, with unbounded faith in David's abilities.



"And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he."—I Samuel xvi, 12.

"He would not do it. Saul was the anointed King, and David would not harm him; nor would he attempt to hurry himself into the throne, though he knew he was to get there by and by. He was too noble and good for that. He did his duty and waited patiently for God to exalt him."

"Did he ever get a chance at Saul?" asked Charley.

"Yes; on two occasions he could easily have slain him, but he would not do it. Once David and some of his friends were hidden in a cave, when lo! Saul himself entered there alone and laid down to sleep. The men wanted David to kill him, urging that the Lord had evidently delivered Saul into his hand. But David contented himself with cutting off the skirt of Saul's robe, and for this, even, his heart reproached him. After a while Saul awoke and went unharmed out of the cave; then David followed, showed him the piece he had cut off the robe, and assured Saul he meant him no harm. David's conduct quite broke Saul's enmity and he apologized humbly for his conduct and begged David's favor. So they parted seemingly friends."

"Well, that was noble!" exclaimed Mary. "I should think that would completely cure Saul."

"But it did not," added Grandpa. "Soon again Saul was pursuing David. But David was not alarmed; so one night he and another brave man named Abishai determined to go right into Saul's camp and into his tent. They started, dangerous though the attempt was, and they reached the place where Saul lay asleep, his great spear stuck in the ground; his armor hung at his head; Abner, his chief soldier, and other trusty men, asleep about him. Then Abishai insisted on pinning Saul to the earth with a spear, but David would not let him. But he did take away Saul's spear and his water-pitcher, which stood by."

"That was kind!" exclaimed Carrie. "Saul would not have done so to David."

"No. But how does the golden rule put it?—Whatsoever ye *would* that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

"I'm not good enough to keep that rule. I'm afraid I wouldn't have been so forbearing as David," added the gentle girl.

"After David left the tent he crept across to a hill out of reach, and then shouted, calling for Abner, who came to see what

the matter was. Then David reproached him for his unsoldierly conduct in allowing his master to lie in so much danger. David also held up the spear and water-jar he had carried off. In the excitement Saul awoke and recognized David's voice. Then again he



"Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily."—I Samuel xxiv, 4.

confessed his sin, said he had played the fool, and promised to trouble David no more. Then David said, Let one of the young men come and get the King's spear. So the spear was sent back, and Saul and David, with their men, went to their homes."

"Well, that surely ended Saul's meanness!" exclaimed Mary.

"Yes; but David did not trust him. So he went with a company of followers and dwelt outside of Saul's dominions."

"But had not David been anointed King of Israel?" interrupted Carrie. "Why did he not set up a throne and fight Saul?"

"He had been anointed, but he had not yet been called of God to take the throne. God set before him a rugged way to the throne, and in patience and forbearance he traveled it. You see how like he was to Jesus, who in the same rough way reached His throne. In this respect David is called a type, or exact pattern, of Jesus. But at last his rugged road ended; he reached the throne."

"How did that come about?" asked Mary.

"Why, Saul became more and more unhappy and desperate. He knew that God was angry with him, and he had no hope for this world or the next. To increase his troubles, the Philistines came up to fight against him. He then began to pray, but God would not answer. He went to the High Priest, but he got no comfort. Then he went to an old woman who called herself a witch, that she might tell him what to do; but he and she were both scared almost to death by the appearance of Samuel, who was dead, but whom God permitted to rise from the dead and appear to the frantic King, to rebuke him and to tell him that the next day he his sons should die."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Mary. "And did they all die the next day?"

"Yes; he went into battle with the Philistines. But he was beaten and chased; his best soldiers and his sons were killed; the enemy were in hot pursuit; then, in a moment of desperation, he threw himself from his horse upon his own sword, so killing himself and dying in the same battle with his sons and the best of his army. Saul being dead, God sent David to Hebron, where he was crowned King by the people of that section, all the nation joining him at a later day."



DEATH OF ISRAEL'S FIRST KING.

THE WAYWARD SON:

OR, TROUBLES AND TRIALS ABOUT THE THRONE.

"DAVID must have been glad when Saul was dead and his own troubles were all over and he was crowned King," said Charley.

"But, my boy," answered Grandpa, "his troubles were not over, neither was he glad when Saul died. On the other hand, David's lament over Saul and his son Jonathan, whom David loved very dearly, is one of the most tender and tearful in the world. I wish each of you would read it and see for yourselves. It is in the first chapter of II Samuel. David really loved these men, and mourned sincerely over their death."

"Was he present when they were killed?" asked Mary.

"Oh! no; he was away on a military expedition elsewhere. Several days later a messenger came and told him the facts. He also brought the crown from Saul's head and the bracelet from his arm, and claimed that he himself had struck the death-blow to the dying Saul. If he thought in this way to please David, he missed his aim sadly, for David was indignant and ordered the man killed on the spot, because by the man's confession he had slain the Lord's anointed."

"Pretty hard on the chap who meant to do David a favor, wasn't it?" said Charley.

"Yes, but David felt that this man had done a great wrong, and his sorrow for Saul's death and Jonathan's knew no bounds."

"But he got over that," said Charley, "and then he enjoyed himself, didn't he?"

"Oh! yes, for he was where God put him and doing what God wanted; but he had many troubles and trials nevertheless. His son Absalom caused him deep sorrow, and no sorrow can be keener than that caused by one's own children. Absalom got up a great plot to



"Shimei . . . came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David."—II Samuel xvi, 5, 6.

make himself King. His conspiracy extended so far and was so desperate that David had to fly for his life. With a few trusted friends he left Jerusalem, and, with feet bare and head covered, to express their sorrow, they went weeping over Mount Olivet to the east of Jerusalem and on into the wild, uninhabited region beyond. As they

went, a man named Shimei followed, cursing David and hurling stones at him. But David was so sorrowful and so humble that he stood all this without complaint."

"Why didn't some of his men go after the rascal and kill him?" asked Charley. "That would have been the way to settle him."

"They wanted to do so, but David would not allow it. He chose patiently and forbearingly to suffer even this outrage. Absalom, meanwhile, had everything his own way at Jerusalem. When he had his army organized to suit him, he marched out to meet the army which had gathered about his father. The armies met in a fearful battle, and though David had insisted that nobody should harm Absalom, yet harmed he was—he was killed, and news of his death soon reached his anxious father. Then came a scene of heartrending sorrow."

"Absalom was the man whose hair was caught in a tree, wasn't he?" asked Carrie.

"Yes; he had a wonderful head of hair, in which he took great pride. As the battle proceeded, Absalom fled for his life. As he rode through the forest his flying hair caught against a low limb, jerking him from the beast on which he rode and leaving him hanging by his hair, helpless and suffering. A moment later, Joab, the commander of David's forces, came along and thrust a dart through the heart of Absalom, and so the young man died. His body was cast into a pit by the soldiers and covered with stones."

"What did David say to that?" asked Carrie; "and he had been so anxious that Absalom should not be hurt."

"The King wept aloud and exclaimed, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! So the victory of that day was turned into mourning until Joab, the General of the army, came and comforted the weeping King."

"Let me read to the children," said their mother, "part of N. P. Willis's beautiful poem, David's Lament over Absalom. He sup-

poses the body of the dead son to have been brought from the forest, and to be lying in state where David was. He says:

The soldiers of the King trod to and fro,
Clad in the garb of battle; and their chief,
The mighty Joab, stood beside the bier
And gazed upon the dark pall steadfastly,
As if he feared the slumberer might stir.
A slow step startled him. He grasped his blade
As if a trumpet rang; but the bent form
Of David entered, and he gave command
In a low tone to his few followers,
And left him with his dead. The King stood still
Till the last echo died; then, throwing off
The sackcloth from his brow and laying back
The pall from the still features of his child,
He bowed his head upon him and broke forth
In the resistless eloquence of woe:

"Alas! my noble boy! that thou shouldst die—
Thou who wert made so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair—
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb,
My proud boy, Absalom!

"Cold is thy brow, my son! and I am chill
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee—
How was I wont to feel my pulses thrill,
Like a rich harp-string, yearning to caress thee—
And hear thy sweet *My father* from these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!

"The grave hath won thee. I shall hear the gush
Of music and the voices of the young,
And life will pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft winds flung—
But thou no more with thy sweet voice shalt come
To meet me, Absalom!

"And oh! when I am stricken, and my heart,
Like a bruised reed, is waiting to be broken,
How will its love for thee, as I depart,
Yearn for thine ear to drink its last deep token!
It were so sweet, amid death's gathering gloom,
To see thee, Absalom!

"And now farewell. 'Tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;
And thy dark sin—oh! I could drink the cup
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My lost boy, Absalom!"

He covered up his face and bowed himself
A moment on his child; then giving him
A look of melting tenderness, he clasped
His hands convulsively as if in prayer;
And, as if strength were given him of God,
He rose up calmly and composed the pall
Firmly and decently, and left him there,
As if his rest had been a breathing sleep."

"That was awfully sad," said Carrie. "David had a hard time after all, hadn't he?"

"Yes, and he had other sorrows, but your young hearts do not need to be shadowed with these clouds, so we will bid the sorrowing King good-night, and to-morrow talk about another son who was a comfort to him."

"His name was Charley, you bet," exclaimed the boy as he gathered his school-books under his arm and started for bed.

GREATEST AMONG KINGS;

OR, SPLENDOR DAZZLING A QUEEN.

"WHICH son of David was the comfort you spoke of last night, Grandpa?" was Carrie's opening question.

"It was Solomon, the half-brother of Absalom. As David grew old, a full brother of Absalom started a conspiracy to make himself King. This came to David's ears, and he at once called his trusted officers and caused Solomon to be proclaimed his successor on the throne. He was crowned at once, and the people welcomed him with shouts of joy. He was very wise. Nothing seemed too difficult for him; and yet, when God came to him one night in a dream and offered him whatever he should ask, he asked, not riches, nor long life, nor the death of his enemies, but he asked wisdom, that he might rule properly over God's people."

"Oh! we had that in our Sunday-school lesson not long ago," said Mary, "and God was so well pleased with the choice Solomon made that He gave him what he asked and a lot more good things besides, didn't He, Grandpa?"

"Yes, and this shows the truth of what Jesus said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

"That's so," added Charley, with real seriousness.

"David at once turned over to Solomon all the affairs of the kingdom and the plans he had himself been maturing, especially that of building a splendid temple for God's service. In the presence of the chief rulers of the nation, David gave a solemn charge to the young King and also to the rulers, and then withdrew from public life."



DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.

"Did Solomon do all his father wanted?" asked Carrie, as if afraid the duties would be neglected.

"Yes, Carrie; he at once began to build the Temple. His own people helped willingly, and so did his neighbors. Hiram, King of Tyre, which lay to the northwest of Canaan, was of great service. He owned the great cedars of Lebanon. Solomon wanted wood from these trees, so Hiram allowed him to send wood-choppers into the mountains where they grew and to cut great trees and haul them to the river; thence they floated to the sea, and so to Joppa, near Jerusalem, where other men took charge of them and hauled them to their places in the Temple. So the work went on. In due time the Temple was completed and dedicated to the service of God. It was one of the most splendid buildings ever erected, and perhaps none ever cost so much."

"How much did it cost, Grandpa?" asked Charley, with his commercial air.

"That is hard to tell, because we are not sure as to the meaning of some statements made about it; nor do we know all the material that was used; nor is any account made of the labor. The gold and silver actually used is estimated at over ten million dollars, and this was simply for adornment. In addition to building this Temple, he did many other marvelous things, and gathered curiosities from all parts of the world. He worked out three thousand proverbs and made one thousand and five songs. He was wise above all men, and rulers came from all parts of the world to talk with him. Among these was a strong-minded woman, the Queen of Sheba. She did not believe Solomon was so wonderful, for she came to prove him by asking hard questions."

"Did she catch him with any of them?" asked Mary.

"She came with great display," continued Grandpa, "and she did her best, but Solomon answered all her questions; but read what is said of her visit in I Kings x, 4, 5."

Carrie found the place and read: "And when the Queen of Sheba



THE QUEENLY VISITOR.

had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her."

"Ha, ha," laughed Charley; "Solomon was too much for her. He took her down a peg or two, didn't he? Guess she went home with a flea in her ear."

"If all this means that she was humbler than when she came, then she was taken down a peg and did get a flea in her ear, as you say," remarked Grandpa, smiling; "but a little boy should hardly talk so about a queen."

"Oh! well, she's dead now, and she was a foreigner anyhow; so it's all right."

"Solomon was much pleased with her visit, and when she was about to leave they exchanged splendid presents and parted good friends. Solomon became richer and richer. The Bible says he exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. Jesus speaks of Solomon's glory as if no other mortal ever was so grand. So David's son became the greatest among kings."

"That was good," exclaimed Carrie, while Charley declared, "I'd just as leave be President as be Solomon; but I'd want plenty of money and to make a big show and dazzle Queen Victoria and all the other queens who'd come to see me." At which speech the family laughed heartily; but Charley, not the least disconcerted, declared that not one of them should be members of the royal family when he should go to live in the White House.

THE RIVAL KINGS;

OR, ROUGH ROADS FOR ROYAL FEET.

"AFTER a reign of forty years Solomon died, and his son, Rehoboam, went to Shechem to be crowned in his stead." Grandpa began his next talk with this statement. He then paused a moment, and Carrie asked: "Was Rehoboam as wise and great as Solomon?"

"No. His first act was a very foolish one, and it split his kingdom into two."

"How did that happen?" the children asked, with evident surprise.

"Solomon had an enemy named Jeroboam. He was a great soldier and had been living in Egypt, where Solomon could not harm him. When the King died he returned at once, and at the head of a large delegation of people he came to Rehoboam and asked that the heavy taxes and immense labor which Solomon had required of them for his many improvements should be made less. Solomon's former counselors urged Rehoboam to promise this to the people; but he was self-willed and stubborn, and said, in answer, that he would make things worse instead of better; that his father had made their yoke heavy, but he would make it heavier; that his father had chastised them with whips, but he would chastise them with scorpions."

"That was silly!" exclaimed Mary; Charley adding his customary "That's so!" in a tone of genuine disgust.

"The result was," continued Grandpa, "that ten tribes of Israel at once refused to serve Rehoboam and called Jeroboam to be their King. Rehoboam soon after sent one of his officers to collect money from these ten tribes, but they killed the man on the spot.

Rehoboam then hurried off to Jerusalem to raise an army; but the Lord's prophet there told him that the Lord had divided the kingdom and that it was useless to attempt its reunion."

"How did they get along in this divided way?" asked Mary.



"So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? . . . to your tents, O Israel."—I Kings xii, 16.

"Badly enough," replied Grandpa. "Jeroboam set up two great idols—one at each end of his kingdom—and the people worshiped them. He made priests from the lowest of the people, offered sacrifices and incense, which displeased God, and in every way became worse and worse all the time. But God has many means of punish-

ing those who sin. Jeroboam had one lovely boy named Abijah. The boy became very sick, and in his sorrow the wicked father wanted help from God; so he sent his wife to one of God's prophets. But he sent her in disguise and with a lie on her tongue, so that she should not be known. But God knew her and told the prophet. As soon as she reached the house of the man of God he called her by name and sent her home again, saying, When thy feet enter into the city the child shall die. He also told her that all her descendants should come to a miserable end."

"That was awful!" exclaimed Carrie; "and specially that her dear, good boy, Abijah, should die."

"It was not awful for the boy, my dear. God loved him and took him from trouble and from violent death, which all his brothers met. Nor was it more awful for Jeroboam and his family than was their vile idolatry and sinfulness against God."

"I know that," said Carrie, almost sobbing; "but think of his poor mother hurrying home, only to find Abijah dead! How sorry she must have been that she went at all!"

"Yes, darling. Sin and sorrow always go together. But she had this comfort—that when her boy died, everybody loved him and all Israel mourned for him; so they buried him lovingly and with many tears."

"And what became of Solomon's son, Rehoboam?" asked Mary.

"He and Jeroboam fought each other all their days. He finally became an idolater and did all manner of evil. But he, too, was punished. When he had reigned some five years the King of Egypt came, conquered him, and carried away all the immense treasures which Solomon had gathered. Rehoboam died after reigning seventeen years. A few years later Jeroboam was killed in battle. So the rival Kings were called from earth. Their kingdoms moved on, their glory declining constantly and their experiences becoming rougher and darker all the time."



DEATH OF THE PRINCE.

MIRACULOUS FEEDING; OR, STRANGE SUPPLIES IN DIRE DISTRESS.

“**W**HAT next have you to tell us, Grandpa?” asked Carrie.
“I enjoyed last night’s talk very much, but I cried myself to sleep over the little Prince who died.”

“Well, darling, I’ll tell you to-night about a little lad who died, but came to life again. That may make amends for the sad story of Abijah.”

“Thanks, Grandpa, but it’s all mended now; I was all right when I awoke this morning.”

“Some sixty years after Solomon died,” began Grandpa, as he settled himself in his easy-chair, “there lived in Canaan a grand old prophet named Elijah. At that time there was a great famine in the land. Rain had not fallen for over three years. This penalty was because of the terrible wickedness of Ahab, King of Israel, and of his people. Everything was dried up and dead. But God took care of His prophet, and sent him to dwell in a wild place where a little brook flowed the whole year. His food was brought in a very strange manner by ravens, which usually eat anything and everything they can find.”

“The idea of ravens—black, ugly things that eat garbage—feeding a good man! Why, I never heard of such a thing,” was the rattling, rambling answer Mary put in at this point.

“But they did it. Bread and flesh were brought him twice a day, till at last the brook dried up and Elijah could get no water. God then sent him to a little city called Zarephath, where a widow woman was to be prepared to supply him with food.”



SUPPLIED IN THE WILDERNESS.



SUPPLIED IN THE CITY.

"A widow woman!" exclaimed Carrie, with some surprise. "A rich widow, I suppose."

"By no means a rich widow, but a very poor one. Indeed, he found her at the gate of the city gathering a few sticks with which to cook the last morsel of food she had, after which she expected that she and her little boy would starve to death. You may imagine she was surprised when a stout, noble-looking man came up and asked her for some water and bread. She declared that all she had was a handful of meal that was left in a barrel and a little oil in a bottle. But Elijah said, Fear not, but bring me food first; God will not let your meal and oil fail until the famine is over. She believed his message and did as he asked, and she and her son and Elijah, too, had plenty to eat, for God continued to feed them, just as the prophet had said."

"Well, those were strange ways of feeding people," said Mary. "It really don't seem true, does it, Grandpa?"

"It is not stranger, my dear, if you but think of it, than to feed them by means of seed cast into the ground, where it is covered up and seemingly dies."

"That's true, Grandpa, but we are so used to the seed that it seems all right."

"While Elijah was staying at that widow's house," Grandpa resumed, "her little boy fell sick and died. The poor mother was in terrible distress; but Elijah took the dead boy, carried him to his own bed, and there prayed over him. God heard that prayer and restored the boy's life, and then Elijah carried him sound and well to the mother, whose sorrow was all turned to joy."

"Ah," said Carrie, "that's my little lad you promised to tell of. I hope he became a good man."

"It was this same Elijah, wasn't it, Grandpa," asked Mary, "who called down fire from heaven and proved to Baal's prophets that his God was the true God?"

"And who went to heaven in a chariot of fire?" said Charley.

"The same," answered Grandpa. "His translation to heaven was an honor such as one other man had, and one only. We have talked of him. Who was he?"

"Enoch," responded all in chorus.



"And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."—I Kings xvii, 22.

"Yes, and if we too walk with God, though we may not ascend to heaven by horses and chariots of fire, yet we shall surely enter the same heavenly home and see the men who were not, because God took them."

"I want to see those men," added Charley, as they separated.

THE PLOWMAN'S APPOINTMENT;

OR, CALLED TO A GREAT OFFICE.

"GRANDPA," began Carrie, "Elijah was such a wonderful man, they must have missed him sadly after God took him."

"Doubtless he was missed, but God had provided another great prophet to take his place. This was Elisha, whom Elijah found working at the plow, and on whom, at God's direction, Elijah threw his own mantle without saying a word."

"What did he do that for?" asked Charley, who could see no special benefit in this disposal of Elijah's mantle.

"That outer robe of Elijah's was an emblem of his authority as a prophet. When he threw it upon Elisha, it meant that Elisha was to succeed him. Elisha knew what it meant, so he left his plow and oxen, followed Elijah, and became his constant attendant and faithful servant, and finally saw him ascend in the chariot of fire."

"Tell us about that, Grandpa, please. It is a lovely story!" exclaimed Carrie.

"Elisha remained constantly with Elijah, seeing and hearing much that fitted him for his future work. At last the time came when the Lord made known to them His intention to take Elijah to heaven. Then Elijah tested the earnestness and devotion of his servant by several times urging him to leave him; but Elisha would do no such thing. He stuck to his master, following him from place to place, and praying that a double portion of the holy and earnest spirit his master had possessed might descend upon himself. One day, as they walked on and talked together, suddenly a chariot and



RIDICULING THE BALD-HEADED MAN.

horses of fire appeared, and away Elijah was carried in an instant, Elisha seeing him ascend, and calling a parting message after him as Elijah's mantle fell and Elisha caught it and kept it as his own."

"Why, I thought Elijah gave that to him in the field where Elisha was plowing," interrupted Charley.

"No, he threw it on him as a sort of prophecy of what was to come, but Elijah was not yet through with his own work as a prophet, so he kept the badge of office till he should need it no more."

"His robe was like a soldier's uniform, wasn't it? Everybody who sees it, knows the man is a soldier," said Charley.

"Just so; while a soldier is on duty he wears his uniform; so does a policeman; so did Elijah," answered Grandpa.

"But after Elijah's ascension Elisha took his place, did he?" inquired Carrie.

"Yes, and filled it well. He told everywhere of the wonderful ascent Elijah had made, but as no one else had seen it, many of the people ridiculed his statement. Some said Elijah's dead body could be found among the mountains, and a party of fifty young men went out and searched three days, but no body could they find; and yet the people doubted. The very children began to make fun of Elisha for telling such a tale. He was a bald-headed man, and one day a lot of children followed him along the road, calling, Go up, thou bald-head! Go up, thou bald-head! Then Elisha turned, looked on them, in God's name denounced their wickedness, and directly two bears rushed out of the woods upon that jeering crowd of children, killing and maiming no less than forty-two of them."

"Well, that was pretty hard," exclaimed Mary. "They had no right to make fun of a good man, especially for a thing he could not help, and which was not a serious defect anyhow; but to kill forty-two children for doing it seems to me cruel."

"So I think," said Carrie, and Charley, regardless of his grammar, shouted, "Me too!"

"But you mistake, children dear," said Grandpa; "it was not done



THE MARVELOUS JAR OF OIL.

from personal spite of Elisha's because they made fun of his bald head, nor was it because they ridiculed his baldness at all; it was because they disbelieved and ridiculed what God had done for Elijah; tauntingly calling on Elisha to go up, too."

"Oh!" said Mary, with surprise, "they meant go up in a chariot of fire, as you say Elijah did."

"Certainly, and that was where their sin was and why they suffered so terribly. God will not permit His acts and words to be treated with contempt."

"I never understood that story before," said Mary. "Nor I," said the other children and their mother also.

"Elisha did another remarkable thing," continued Grandpa. "The widow of a poor but very good man came to him one day in great distress because she and her two boys were about to be sold as slaves to pay an old debt."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Carrie. "I'm glad such barbarous things are not done now."

"They were done then, and she was about to experience it to her sorrow. But Elisha asked what she had to sell. All she had was one pot of oil. Go borrow from your neighbors all the empty jars you can get, was Elisha's order. She and the boys did it, and borrowed a great lot of empty vessels of all styles and sizes. Then, as Elisha had ordered, they went into their house, shut the door, and poured oil from their one jar into one of the empty jars until it was full; then they filled another and another, and so on until all were filled—the marvel being that their own small jar of oil did not get empty, but the oil held out until all the others were filled. Then, as Elisha had ordered, they sold the entire lot of oil, paid the debt, and were a free and happy family once more."

"Good for Elijah!" shouted Charley.

"Not Elijah; he was in heaven. Elisha did this," said Carrie.

"Well, good for both of 'em, anyhow," persisted Charley, as the evening's chat ended.

THE LITTLE CAPTIVE; OR, WHAT A SERVING MAID MAY DO.

“GRANDPA, tell us a girl’s story to-night, please,” asked Carrie, as the company gathered again in the sitting-room.

“All right, my child; it shall be about a little servant girl. We do not know her name, but she had once lived near Elisha and knew of his wonderful works. She then was captured and became a slave and lived in Damascus, a great, splendid city, many miles from her former home in Samaria. Her master was a great general, who was much beloved by his King, but alas! he had a terrible disease called leprosy, for which there was no cure. One day this little girl was waiting on her mistress, who was very sad because her husband was so diseased. The little girl, full of sympathy, said to her at last, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would cure his leprosy! They were not long in acting on this hint. Off to Samaria, which is part of Canaan, went the great Naaman, with horses, chariots, attendants, robes, money, letters from the King, and everything else that could promote his cause.”

“That was a big parade for a little girl to start,” remarked Charley.

“Yes, and it had big results,” added Grandpa. “It scared the King of Samaria badly, for he thought it meant war. But Elisha sent word that the King need not worry, and for Naaman to come to his house. Naaman went, but when there he became terribly angry, for Elisha did not so much as come to the door to speak with him. He simply sent out word for Naaman to go and wash in Jordan seven times. Up at Damascus were some of the most beautiful rivers of the world. Naaman had used their waters without good effect, and

must he now go and wash in a muddy stream such as the Jordan? He was angry. He turned and went away in a terrible rage, and Elisha did not trouble himself about it, but just let him go."



THE JORDAN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS ABOVE JERICO.

"Ha, ha," laughed Charley; "he must have been mad. He thought he was somebody, but Elisha didn't care a button for him, did he?"

"No; but as Naaman jogged homeward in his chariot he cooled off, and when he came to the Jordan, he concluded to try a bath anyhow. Down he went and in he plunged. Seven times he dipped in

the muddy water, and then lo! his rough, scaly, reddened, itching skin became soft, smooth, and pure as that of a baby."



GEHAZI SUCCESSOR TO NAAMAN.

"He was glad, I'm sure," was the reply of both girls; but Charley's cry was, "Good for the Jordan! Is there any skating there?"

"Skating there!" exclaimed Mary. "Charley Reed, are you crazy? Why, it's so warm there that the Jordan is more likely to boil than to freeze. Didn't you know that?"

"Oh! yes, and I'm glad you know, too. Please go on, Grandpa."

"No sooner was Naaman cured than he hurried back to reward Elisha. Not a cent would Elisha take; but he had a servant named Gehazi, who heard the conversation and resolved not to let Naaman off so cheaply. When Naaman started again, this fellow ran after him, and by means of a cunning lie got from him a splendid gift, which he stowed away in his own room and went in to Elisha looking innocent as a lamb. But Elisha cornered him in his fraud and said, The leprosy of Naaman cleave unto thee. In an instant Gehazi was covered with leprosy, and was never cured."

"That was awful. But he was certainly very wicked," said Mary.

"But what, think you, was the sin of Gehazi?" asked Grandpa.

"Lying," answered Charley. "He hadn't heard of the boy who could not tell a lie."

"Stealing," answered Carrie.

"Love of money," said Mary. "That made him lie and steal."

"Yes; Paul says the love of money is the root of all evil, and we see how big a crop of evil that root bore to Gehazi. On the other hand, we see the crop of blessings that came from the honest words of the little captive."

"He got more than he wanted, didn't he, Grandpa? He got the money and the leprosy to boot," was the parting comment of Charley as, with hands in his pockets as if fumbling his own wealth, he prepared to leave for the night.

"Yes, and his children and his children's children got more than they wanted, too, for Elisha said, The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave to thee and to thy seed forever. So Gehazi could not tell the amount of ill his one sin brought."

"Nor the little girl the amount of good she brought," said Mrs. Reed, as she kissed her own girls good-night.

THE MYSTERIOUS PANIC; OR, ABUNDANCE FOR STARVATION.

"TELL us another story about Elisha," was the unanimous demand of the children when they met Grandpa again; so he began as follows:

"Near the close of Elisha's life he was in the city of Samaria. The Syrian army had besieged it, and it was shut up so closely that no one could go out or come in. Food soon became very scarce, so that all kinds of animals were eaten for food, and even human flesh was so used. When everything was at its worst, Elisha quietly told the people that on the next day food would be abundant. Nothing was less probable. The great army around the city meant to starve the people into surrender. So unlikely was Elisha's prophecy that the people ridiculed his statement, and one great man of the city declared that this could not be even if the Lord should open windows in heaven."

"Pretty badly off if that could not relieve them," commented Mary. "But that was exaggeration."

"They were badly off—so badly, indeed, that mothers killed, cooked and ate their own babes to escape starvation."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Carrie.

"It was horrible indeed," answered Grandpa; "and you can easily imagine something of the sufferings that filled the city. All were hungry and emaciated for want of food until strength was gone and they looked like living skeletons. Fever and delirium seized many of them. Such as were able to move prowled about like hungry hyenas seeking a morsel to eat. Here and there mothers, half-

crazed with hunger, destroyed their children to use their flesh for food. So horrors abounded on every side."

"Don't tell us any more about that," said Carrie, with a shudder. "I can't stand such terrible things. How did they get out of this misery?"

"Outside the city gates," resumed Grandpa, without directly answering Carrie, "were four lepers. They were not allowed inside lest they should give their disease to others. There those poor fellows were between the closed gates and the hostile army. They were almost starved, and did not know what to do. After talking it over, they determined to go into the Syrian's camp and surrender themselves. Perhaps they would be fed; perhaps they would be killed; but to stay where they were was to die sure. They decided to go. Down the hill they went, poor, miserable, diseased, beggarly fellows that they were; but as they came near the camp, they saw not a man. Into the camp they entered; from tent to tent they passed. There were horses, arms, food, silver, gold, garments, everything belonging to a well-filled camp, but not a man in sight. Every soul had fled."

"Why, Grandpa, what was the matter? Where were the soldiers?" asked Carrie, in surprise.

"Gone to breakfast," said Charley, with well-assumed seriousness. "The bell had just rung."

"Let Mary read the reason from II Kings vii, 6, 7."

Mary did as was suggested, and read these words: "For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host; and they said one to another, Lo! the King of Israel hath hired against us the Kings of the Hittites and the Kings of the Egyptians to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents and their horses and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life."

"Well! well!" shouted Carrie in surprise, while Charley opened



IN SIGHT OF THE DESERTED CAMP.

his eyes wider than usual and declared they were a set of chicken-hearted boys, to be scared at nothing; but Grandpa reminded him that the Lord, who was no trivial foe, had scared them, and then went on with the story.

"The first thought of the four lepers was to take for themselves all the treasures they could hide or carry away. But a better, nobler thought then came; away they ran to the people who had shut them out to starve, and told the good tidings of what had happened. Then the gates were opened, out rushed the hungry people, and through the deserted camp they swarmed. There was enough food and plenty to spare, besides an abundance of other treasures the Syrians had left. In this way Elisha's prophecy was fulfilled, impossible though its fulfillment had seemed on the preceding day."

"Weren't they afraid to open the gates and rush out?" asked Mary. "The Syrians might have been watching in ambush for them."

"They guarded against that danger. It was early evening when the lepers found that the camp was deserted. When they came back to the city's gate and told those who kept it, it was late in the evening. The news was so important that it was carried to the King, who ordered spies to go out and learn the facts. These men found that the Syrians had indeed fled to the Jordan and across it. Then they came back, in the morning of the next day, and told the good news, after which the gates were thrown open and every man helped himself, as I told you."

"I guess that great man felt flat enough when he saw Elisha's words come true."

"Yes, Charley, especially as in the rush of the people he fell flat and was trampled to death under their feet."

"Oh! Grandpa, is that so?"

"Yes, Charley, it was even so. Elisha said to him that he should see the plenty, but should not eat of it. So it happened, for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died."

THROWN FROM THE WINDOW; OR, A WICKED QUEEN'S FEARFUL END.

"**S**HALL I tell you about a great Queen to-night?" asked Grandpa Goodwin, as his little audience, enlarged by a few of their friends, gathered about him.

"Yes, yes, yes," came in from all sides.

"By birth she was a heathen princess; she worshiped idols and served them with all her heart. Her father was King of Sidon, a famous city on the Mediterranean Sea."

"What was her name?" asked Charley.

"Her name was Jezebel, the same as our Isabel or Isabella. She became the wife of Ahab, the worst of all Israel's kings, and she was his inspiration in all his evil; she planned most of it and urged him to all of it. In Elijah's time she murdered all the Lord's prophets she could find, while at her own expense she kept no less than four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, the false god, and four hundred of Astarte, the false goddess. By these means she so strengthened idol-worship that those who served the true God were few and far between. Indeed, Elijah did not know a man beyond himself who was faithful to God. The Lord, however, told him there were seven thousand in the land who had not worshiped Baal. But they were scattered and hidden away from the cruelties of Jezebel. When Elijah roused the people by calling fire from heaven, so that it slew the prophets of Baal, then Jezebel was furious and swore that Elijah's life should be taken within twenty-four hours. But the Lord protected him and she was disappointed."

"She ought to have been locked up!" declared Charley, vehem-



ently. "Hanging wouldn't have been bad enough for her. And she a woman, too!"

"You're right, Charley!" exclaimed Carrie, warmly. "It's bad enough for anybody to be so wicked, and far worse for a woman. But what became of her, Grandpa?"

"She did not become better, I am sorry to say. One of her later exploits will show of what she was capable in the way of wickedness. Her husband was anxious to get a vineyard belonging to one Naboth, who refused to sell it, which made Ahab quite unhappy. For this she spoke most contemptuously to her husband and said, I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth. So she ordered the chief men of Naboth's neighborhood to put him on trial for blasphemy; to bring false witnesses against him; to convict him on the spot, and to stone him to death. It was done. They dared not disobey her. Then she sent

Ahab to take the vineyard for himself. Soon after this Ahab was slain in battle, but she lived on, opposing the Lord's servants."

"What a horrible woman she must have been!" exclaimed Carrie.

"She was, and her name is used in the Bible for all that is base and godless. But for Naboth's murder God said by Elijah that the dogs should eat the flesh of Jezebel. She was at the city of Jezreel, in the palace where as Queen-mother her influence was unlimited, when a wild, reckless hero named Jehu came on his mission of blotting out the family of Ahab. Jezebel knew that her hour had then come, and she nerved herself to meet her fate. She dressed her hair, painted her face, and took position at a lofty window over the entrance."

"Painted her face!" exclaimed both the girls. "Why in the world did she do that?"

"Just why she did it cannot be said positively. Women generally did this in those days by touching around the eyes with dark paint so as to make the eyes look larger and brighter. She may have meant to increase her imposing appearance, so possibly to impress Jehu favorably and soften his heart; or she may have meant to die as a queen, in royal robes and with the fullest display."

"How did her little scheme succeed?" inquired Mary.

"Directly the chariot of Jehu came rolling up to the gate, and she called to him with a reproachful question. Surprised to see her, the evil spirit of all the evil of Ahab's reign, he called back, asking who was on his side. Immediately two or three servants looked out of the window, as if to say, We are. Throw her down, cried Jehu. Down they did throw her, headlong upon the pavement below, her blood being dashed against the wall and upon the horses, which were then driven over her body as the conquerors drove into the palace-grounds. Then came the dogs, always numerous in those cities of the far East, and tore to shreds the remains of this proud Queen."

"That was awful!" exclaimed all the children at once.

"When I become Queen," said Mary, with a laugh, "I'll pattern after some other queen, not after Jezebel."

GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL;

OR, A GODLY QUEEN'S NOBLE ACT.

"AFTER you went to bed last night," began Mrs. Reed, "I told Grandpa I was afraid you would all have bad dreams, that was so terrible a story about Jezebel! But to-night we are to offset last night by the story of another Queen who was both good and beautiful."

The children all declared they had no bad dreams, though Carrie said that two or three times she fancied herself thrown out of a window. But all agreed they were glad to have learned about the fearful end of that bad woman, and were now ready to hear about one who was better.

"And who is this better Queen, my dears?" was Grandpa's opening question, to which Charley, for want of a better answer, responded, Queen Victoria; but Mary came to the rescue, declaring her belief that Esther was the one.

"Yes, Esther is the one of whom I want to tell you. She was young, beautiful, and good. With many other Jews, she was a captive in Persia, but her beauty brought her to the notice of the King, Ahasuerus, and he made her Queen. He was a selfish, brutal man, killing people or honoring people as he pleased. Esther was an orphan; her uncle, Mordecai, had brought her up. He was a proud, stern old man, who always did what was right, and so displeased many persons, among them Haman, the ruler next to the King. This man began to plan, therefore, not only to kill Mordecai, but all his kindred too. He soon persuaded the King to order the general slaughter of the Jews, and—"



PREPARING THE DOCUMENTS.

"Why, could he do such a thing for no cause at all?" exclaimed Mary. "Kings can't do so now, can they, Grandpa?"

"Not in civilized governments; but there are still many rulers in half-civilized and barbarous nations who do just as they please in these things. Printing was not known then, nor telegraphs and telephones—so the King's scribes, or writers, were put to work, and orders were sent through all the Persian dominions commanding that on a certain day all Jews, young or old, male or female, should be killed."

"Horrible!" cried Mary; "I shall have bad dreams over this story, I'm sure."

"Maybe not; wait for the end and see. Of course, the Jews were in distress, but Haman was in great glee and had a jolly time with the King, drinking wine and talking over this great decision. Esther did not know what had happened till she saw Mordecai mourning; then she learned from him, and saw that her life, too, was in peril."

"Why didn't she go to the King at once and tell him just how it was?" asked Carrie, with surprise.

"Because even she, the King's wife, did not dare go into his presence except he sent for her. If she should do so and he pleased to reach out his sceptre toward her, it would be all right; but if he happened to be sulky and did not reach out the sceptre, the guards would hurry her off to instant death."

"Hoorah!" came from Charley at this point. "That's a pretty way for a man to serve his wife. Ha, ha! suppose papa would serve you so, mamma. The police would get him quick, wouldn't they?" So the boyishness subsided and Grandpa went on.

"Esther sent word for all the Jews to join her in fasting and prayer for three days; then she would go in to the King, which was contrary to law, but, said she, if I perish, I perish. The people did pray; she went in to the King; he held out the sceptre; she touched it, as was the proper thing to do; he asked what he could do to please her, saying she should have it if it cost half his kingdom. She told of Ha-



NOT HUNG, BUT HONORED.

man's plot, and begged the lives of herself and her people. So angry at Haman did the King become that he ordered him to be hanged on the very gallows Haman had built for Mordecai. Then Esther begged the King to recall his order for the death of her people. He did it, and through her noble act her people lived in peace and prosperity."

"And what became of the old uncle?" asked Carrie.

"Why, before Haman was exposed and hanged, the King discovered how true Mordecai had been to a former King, and that this service had never been rewarded. So he had Mordecai mounted on his own horse, led through the streets by Haman, and all honor shown him on the way. Then, when Haman's guilt was exposed, Mordecai was put into his place next the King, and all the people were glad, for the right had triumphed. The good man had been exalted, the bad man had been punished."

"That's the Queen I'll copy," said Mary. "I'll make the people glad when I reign over them."

"There is another fact that may be of interest to you. There is to this day a great festival kept by all Jews and called the feast of Purim. It was instituted by Mordecai, at Esther's suggestion, in honor of the deliverance of the Jews from Haman's vile plot. In celebrating this feast in Jewish synagogues the entire book of Esther is read. Whenever the name of Mordecai is mentioned, all of the congregation exclaim, Blessed be Mordecai! When Haman's name is mentioned, they all exclaim, May his name perish! The remainder of the feast-day is spent in social festivity and merriment."

"I don't wonder there is rejoicing in memory of that deliverance. It was really wonderful," said Carrie.

SATAN LET LOOSE;

OR, SUFFERING WITHOUT SINNING.

"LAST night," Grandpa began, "we saw sorrow turned to joy for the poor captive Jews in Persia. I will now tell you of another case which occurred many years before and in which sorrow was turned to joy."

"Whose case is this?" asked Mary.

"It is Job's. He was a godly man, who probably lived about the time of Abraham. He was very rich, and had a large family of dutiful children. One day there came a series of calamities by which all his children were killed and most of his property was swept away."

"Why, how did all this happen?" asked Mary.

"A whirlwind struck the house where his children were feasting together, and they were buried in the ruins. The same storm destroyed a large portion of his flocks and many of his servants who were tending them. In the midst of this panic a band of robbers fell upon Job's herds in another place and drove them off. In this way blow after blow fell on Job suddenly and fearfully, yet he did not complain, but humbled himself before God, saying in his sorrow, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

"I don't see why the Lord permits men who are so good to suffer, anyway," said Mary, thoughtfully. "Why is it, Grandpa? Can you explain it?"

"His reasons are not always clear. In this case the story is told in full, and we know why it happened. Satan had persisted that



IN THE DEPTHS OF AFFLICTION.

the only reason for Job's piety was his prosperity, and that if God would afflict him he would curse God instead of praising Him. To prove how false this was God gave Satan permission to do any harm he pleased to Job, only forbidding him to touch Job himself. Satan used his permission to its fullest extent and in the terrific way of which I told you."

"Satan was just turned loose on him that time, wasn't he?" asked Charley.

"But didn't get Job to sin, did he?" asked Mary.

"No, Mary. The Bible says that in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

"Satan must have felt a good deal ashamed of himself after that," said Charley.

"But he did not," answered Grandpa. "He explained his failure by saying, All that a man hath will he give for his life. So he urged God to put forth His hand and touch Job's flesh; then he affirmed Job would certainly curse Him to His face."

"The vile old mischief-maker!" exclaimed Mary; "how could he say such hateful things?"

"Sure enough," resumed Grandpa; "but he did say them, and God was willing to test Job still further, so He permitted Satan to cover him with terrible boils. So fearful was his suffering that Job threw himself down among the ashes, as persons in deep affliction then were accustomed to do. To make matters worse, his wife turned against him, urging him to curse God and die. But in all this Job said no sinful or foolish word. He mourned, of course, but he did not sin."

"And is this the reason for our afflictions, Grandpa, that God may test us?" asked Mary.

"Much of the affliction of the righteous is sent to show others how God can comfort and keep His people."

"Was that why Uncle Ben suffered so much?" asked Carrie
"He was sick so long, and yet he always was so happy."

"I have no doubt God meant to show by Uncle Ben, as He did by Job, how much a child of His could suffer and yet be happy. But it is not easy to understand why the good suffer. Job had three very wise and excellent friends who came to see him in his distress. They could not understand why he should be so afflicted unless while he seemed so good he was really a hypocrite practicing secret sins. This Job denied most earnestly. He was sure God had other reasons, though what they were was not clear to him."

"Why, Grandpa, the talk between Job and these friends makes up most of the book of Job, don't it?" said Mary, adding in explanation, "I was looking over Job a few days ago and noticed it was a long conversation or argument."

"Yes, the discussion of Job and his friends is given there in full. They did not make the darkness much clearer—so another friend came at last, a younger man, but one who was very wise, and he did get nearer the truth than the others. But he, too, was somewhat in error—so God spoke, and by Him the truth was made plain and all the men were set right."

"That was good. If God only helps us out of our troubles we are sure to get out on the right side."

"True, Mary. Job came out on the right side, and as he did so, his final words to the Lord were these: I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee. Who is He that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech Thee, and I will speak: I will demand of Thee, and declare Thou unto me. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

"What happened after all this?"

"After all this, Charley, God blessed Job more than ever before. His kindred and his old acquaintances all came to him with rich presents. His cattle increased abundantly. Seven sons and three

daughters were given him, which was just the number that he had before his calamity came. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."

"Yes, Grandpa; but he must have become so old and broken down that he could not enjoy his prosperity," said Carrie.



"Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before."—Job xlii, 11.

"Not so, darling. He lived at a time when men's lives were much longer than now, so that even after his sufferings he lived one hundred and forty years, seeing four generations of his descendants. Then he died, an old man, but full of honors as he was of years."

UNCOMFORTABLE QUARTERS; OR, THE RUNAWAY BROUGHT BACK.

"GRANDPA," began Charley, "isn't it most time for Jonah? I want you to tell me about him. I can understand what you tell a fellow."

"Well, yes, it is about time for him," answered Grandpa. "In a few days I am to leave home for a little while, so we can have just a few more talks. Charley has chosen Jonah as his hero; who does Mary choose?"

"Daniel," answered she in an instant; and as Grandpa's eye turned to Carrie for her choice, she said, "More Daniel."

"So let it be," added Grandpa. "Jonah and Daniel are our subjects. You can read the book of Jonah readily, and Daniel also. Do this, and be prepared to ask questions and understand answers."

"But tell us about Jonah now, please, Grandpa," urged Charley. "I just want to see the old chap bounce overboard and slide down that whale's throat."

"You seem to have his history well in mind, Charley; but I may clear up some points. Jonah was a prophet, a sort of preacher, and God told him to go to Nineveh, a great city of the far East, and there to preach. Jonah did not like this appointment, so he slipped off in the other direction and took passage on a ship going to the far West, on the Mediterranean Sea. Jonah thought, possibly, that he had given God the slip, but he was woefully in error there."

"Ha, ha!" roared Charley. "He was a great old preacher. Why we boys wouldn't have him for a Sunday-school teacher if he didn't know better than that—we wouldn't. We'd bounce him quick."

"The ship was soon on her way with Jonah as a first-class passenger, and thinking he had done a cute thing. But directly a terrific storm arose. The sailors could not manage their poor, cranky vessel. She was about to upset or go to pieces. It seemed as if every one on board would surely go to the bottom. Every man of them then



"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging."—
Jonah i, 15.

began to pray, some to one heathen god and some to another. Things got worse. They were terribly frightened. But Jonah was not on deck. He was down in his bunk asleep. Down goes the captain and wakes him, that he, too, may pray. He came on deck, and just then some one proposed that they cast lots to see on whose account this storm had been sent. It was done on the instant, and Jonah was the one on whom it fell."

"Bad luck to him," muttered Charley, as though himself a sufferer by the storm.

"Jonah owned up that he was trying to run away from his God, and he himself proposed that they pitch him overboard, and so save themselves. They hated to do this, but there was no help for it. The storm grew worse; the danger became greater every moment. Then, after a brief prayer to Jonah's God, they threw him into the sea. He was lost to their sight in an instant, and then the storm was over."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Carrie. "Poor Jonah overboard and the others all safe."

"But he, too, was safe," answered Grandpa. "While the storm was raging God was guiding a great sea-monster up close to the little ship. The Bible says God prepared this great fish; that is, he had it there all ready to swallow Jonah, and to dive deep, so that neither man nor fish were seen by any on the ship."

"Was it a whale that swallowed him?" asked Mary.

"Our English New Testament calls it a whale, but the original word for it in the Scriptures means any great fish or sea-monster, whether whale, shark, or some other. Whales are not found in the Mediterranean Sea; they belong to colder waters at the far North. But the preparation which God made of that fish may have been simply the leading of it into those unusual waters."

"But could Jonah have lived inside of a whale for three days?" inquired Carrie.

"Yes; the head of the right whale is an immense, roomy space. From the top of this space great flakes of whalebone hang, from the edges of which long, threadlike fibers extend in great abundance. Old whalers say that a boat's crew could lodge in the head of a right whale."

"But how could Jonah live there so long?" insisted Carrie.

"That's what I want to know, too," urged Charley. "There's too much fun poked at Jonah. I want to know about it."

"That is what I am getting at," answered Grandpa, smiling at the eagerness of his little hearers. "The right whale has a very small throat or gullet. Jonah could not have passed it and entered the stomach of the fish, but he could live among those pendant flakes of whalebone. As the fish opened its mouth to skim its food off the surface of the sea, Jonah would have been tumbled back into the great mouth along with water, sea-weed, small fishes, and other material. Then the water would be forced from the mouth by the animal and the small food would be drawn through the gullet and into the stomach. Jonah's quarters during these processes would be warm, wet, dark, and generally uncomfortable, but that he could live there for three days, and that, too, without the help of a miracle, no old whaler doubts."

"Well, I never heard that explanation before," said Mrs. Reed, the children adding, "Nor I, nor I, nor I."

"I think Jonah refers to the threadlike edges of the flakes of whalebone when, after his rescue, he says, The weeds were wrapped about my head."

"But how about his getting out?" asked Charley, as if in some doubt.

"Nothing more natural," answered Grandpa. "The whale would soon discover that he had more in his mouth than he could swallow, and he would very soon sicken under it. In this condition he would naturally run himself ashore; the opportunity for Jonah to get out would soon arrive, and he would not be slow to improve it. So the runaway was brought back to land, and was quite willing to obey God."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Charley; that's the best yet. I've known many a fellow to catch a fish, but Jonah is the first one I ever knew that a fish caught."

"And many a one has swallowed a fish, but this is one of the few a fish swallowed," added Carrie, with a laugh.

THE DISAPPOINTED PREACHER;

OR, PROPHECY NOT FULFILLED.

“WE were to talk about Daniel to-night, but I want more Jonah,” said Charley. “He was such an odd fish, I want to know more about him.”

“All right,” answered Grandpa. “Just where the whale landed him is not told us, but probably it was not far from his starting point. Jonah’s zeal for running away from God was somewhat dampened, and he was ready to do whatever God wished. God had no new command for him nor any change of the old. The order was, Go to Nineveh and preach what I shall tell thee. So Jonah arose and went.”

“Where was Nineveh?” asked Carrie.

“Some four hundred miles to the east of the Mediterranean, across a wide desert, and on the banks of the Tigris River. It was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, and was noted for its wealth and its wickedness. From its ruins fragments have been dug in our days which show how great and grand its palaces were. By comparing these pieces one with another very clear ideas of those palaces can be formed, and this is called *restoring* them.”

“What was Jonah to preach there?” asked Mary.

“His message was, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

“Why, what had Nineveh done that it was to be overthrown?”

“It had been very wicked, Carrie, so God decided to destroy it. But as Jonah went through the city with his fearful warning, the people began to weep and to mourn before God. They also pro-

claimed a solemn fast, during which neither men nor beasts tasted food or drink. With this deep humility God was well pleased, and pardoned them."

"And so He did not destroy Nineveh, after all?"

"No, Mary. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked,



"And Jonah began to enter into the city . . . and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."—Jonah iii, 4.

but prefers that they repent and live. He was glad they repented, and was glad to let them live."

"And what was Jonah doing all this while?" asked Charley.

"When Jonah saw their repentance and knew God forgave them, he became very angry. He had declared God would destroy them in forty days, but God had concluded not to do it, so Jonah was dis-

appointed because his warning was not realized. He said that he knew God would act just this way, and for this reason he tried to run off and not go to Nineveh at all."

"Why, I am amazed at him," said Mary. "Did he really prefer the people should be destroyed?"

"So it seems. But God taught him a lesson. He went out of the city and fixed up a tent in which to stay. The place was warm and uncomfortable, but Jonah did not want to stay in the city, where, he imagined, everybody was sneering at him as a false prophet. While he lodged in his booth outside the city, God made a vine spring up over it which shaded it nicely and made it far more pleasant. Jonah was very glad to have this favor from God; he thought it splendid to be taken care of in this way. But a worm came directly, gnawed his vine at the root, and lo! it died. Then came a very hot day, with a furious, parching wind, and Jonah was in despair; he wanted to die at once. The moment his favor from God was gone he howled with distress. Then God talked with him and showed how selfish he was; he had no concern at all for the thousands of Nineveh, but preferred that they should perish, and was bitterly angry because they were spared. For himself, however, he wanted every comfort, and was in a towering passion because a vine that sheltered him had died."

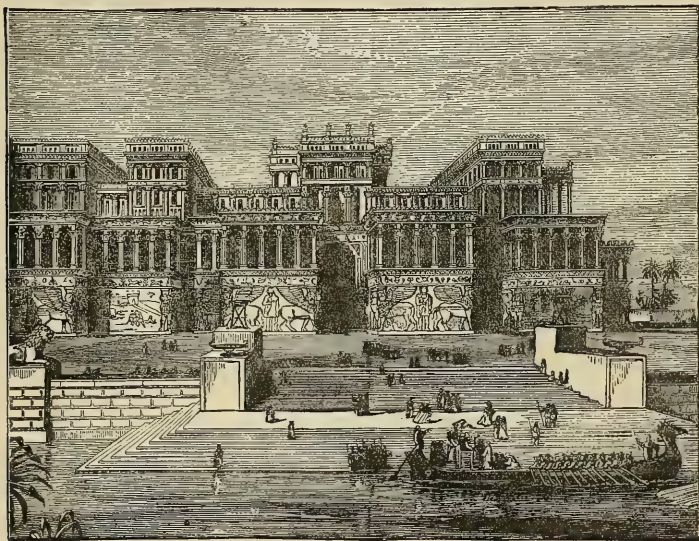
"Well, well!" exclaimed Carrie. "That was selfish! And he a prophet, too. I expected better things of such men."

"He was a prophet, darling, not because he was a perfect man, but simply because God chose to give him a message which he was to speak. That is the idea of a prophet. A false prophet may falsely claim to be sent of God or may tell his message falsely. A true prophet is one whom God sends and who tells truly what God says. That Jonah did; but in other respects he was an ignorant and very imperfect man."

"What became of Nineveh?" asked Charley.

"It was spared in the time of Jonah; but some years later—pos-

sibly a hundred or more—it was totally destroyed. Its great walls and palaces and towers were battered down so completely that for centuries the site of the city was not so much as known. In 1820 a Mr. Rich began to examine the heaps of rubbish near the city of Mosul, on the Tigris. He found many objects of interest, and other explorers joined in the search. One named Botta went to work in



PALACE OF SARGON AT NINEVEH—AS RESTORED.

1843 and made most valuable discoveries. A little later came Layard, who exceeded them in the extent of his searches and the knowledge of them which he gave the world. Other men have done a vast amount of work in digging treasures from these ruins."

"I'd like to go there next summer. I'd dig up a lot of palaces and fine things—I would."

FOUR NOBLE BOYS;

OR, RIGHT BETTER THAN ROYALTY.

"DANIEL is the man to-night," said Mary, as the family assembled again.

"Let us say the *boy* to-night," replied Grandpa, "for I want to tell of him and his boy associates. They say, you know, As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined. I want to show you how this twig bent."

"That's good!" exclaimed Mary. "We shall know Daniel all the way from boyhood up."

"Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, had conquered Jerusalem and taken a large number of Jews back to his dominions as slaves. By and by he thought it would help him in ruling the Jews if he should take some of their lads and train them up to become his assistants. So he ordered that four of the most promising Jewish boys be picked out for this honor, and the first of these was Daniel."

"Who were the others?" inquired Charley. "There must have been a scramble among the boys to get that chance."

"I suppose there was a scramble, as you call it, Charley. It was as when our Congressmen offer an appointment at West Point or Annapolis to the best boy in the public schools. Many try hard for the chance, though one only gets the place; so here many tried, I doubt not, but four only were chosen."

"And who were the other three?" asked Charley again.

"Their names were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego."

"O ho! they were the fiery furnace boys!" exclaimed Mary.

"The same. These four boys were taken to the King's palace



THE YOUNG TEETOTALERS.

and were taught all the elegance and learning of the day. They were to have schooling and board, such as fitted princes of that land, for three years, and then they were to begin their royal service. But these four Hebrew boys did not want to use the rich food and the wine sent them by the King. When the man who had charge of them urged them to use what the King had ordered, they refused, and asked for plain food such as their own captive kinsmen were compelled to use."

"What harm could good victuals do them?" asked Carrie.

"But were they good victuals?" asked Grandpa. "Wine is a mocker, you know—so they preferred cold water. Many kinds of food were forbidden the Jews by their law. By eating what the heathen King sent, these boys would almost certainly break the law, so they preferred a simple vegetable diet. It was not a mere whim, nor a piece of contrariness; it was a clear case of conscience with them, and God honored it."

"How did God honor it?" asked Carrie.

"Well, the man in charge of them was afraid such plain food would make them look poor and sick, but he gave them a ten days' trial. At the end of this time their countenances were fairer and their flesh was fatter than all the youthful Princes of Babylon who ate the King's provision. So God honored them with good health and good looks."

"But did this hold out?" inquired Mary.

"It did; and it held out so well that at the end of their three years of preparation these four lads surpassed all their companions both in ability and appearance, and to them were given the highest honors of the King's service."

"Did Daniel keep ahead of the other three?" asked Mary.

"Yes; he was specially wise and good, understanding dreams, visions, and all other hard things. The King was very fond of him, too, and often called him in and talked with him, for he found Daniel *ten times better*, as the record puts it, than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."



THE BOY COUNSELOR.

"Good!" shouted Charley. "That twig was bent to some purpose, wasn't it?"

"Who were the magicians and astrologers, Grandpa? I don't believe in magicians, and I don't know what the other word means."

"I don't wonder that you ask, Carrie; and I am glad that you do. Men bearing these titles have always been famous in Eastern lands, and have had great power there. The magicians were professional tricksters, like the men who exhibit nowadays as necromancers, magicians, prestidigitators, and so on. Every art is used by such men to make their performances impressive, and much that they do cannot be understood by boys and girls, nor by most men and women. But there is nothing superhuman in all this. It is mere skill."

"That's what I think," replied Carrie; "but who were the astrologers?"

"Men who studied the stars and attempted to tell from them what was about to happen. They knew the stars well, but their pretense to foretell events by the stars was a humbug."

"It wasn't so hard for sensible fellows like Daniel and his chums to be ten times better than such old hulks, was it?" asked Charley.

"The *old hulks*, as you call them, had no God to help them as Daniel and *his chums*, as you call them, had," answered Mrs. Reed, smiling at the boy's familiar treatment of Bible characters.

"Ah," said Mary, "those four are the boys for me."

"They were four noble boys," answered Grandpa; "and their great success came from the fact that they preferred to do the right rather than to follow the ways of royalty. They stuck to their religious principles, though they were in the palace of a heathen king."

"They were boys worthy of high places," said Mrs. Reed; "and I am sure such boys always will rise, whether in heathen or Christian lands."

FAITHFUL AND FEARLESS; OR, BRAVING DEATH FOR DUTY'S SAKE.

"**H**ERE we are, Grandpa!" exclaimed Mary, as he entered the room where the children were already seated, awaiting his coming. "Here we are! anxious to hear how our boys got along."

"Always anxious about the boys," said Charley, with a knowing shake of his head—which called from Mary the good-natured retort, "They are never safe out of our sight."

"Perhaps the shortest way to show how the boys got along is to read the last two verses of the second chapter of Daniel."

No sooner had Grandpa said this than Mary and Carrie both reached for the Bible. Carrie was the quicker, and in a moment read as follows: "Then the King made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the King, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the King."

"The *gate* was where business was attended to. He sat to attend to the King's business; he was the chief officer under the sovereign. Of course, all this made others envious of him and his Hebrew associates, and many schemes were devised against them."

"Mean again!" said Mary, in a tone of deep disgust.

"Yes. When you study human history you find plenty of meanness, but also a goodly amount of true nobility. Soon after the honors of which Carrie just read, Nebuchadnezzar set up a great

image of his god, Bel-merodach, and sent for all the chief men of his kingdom to attend its dedication and, at a given signal, to fall down and worship it. Daniel, for some reason, did not attend the service. He may have been sick, he may have been absent, or the King, knowing Daniel would not bow to this false god, may have excused his attendance or kept him busy elsewhere."

"The other three were there, though. I'm sure of that," said Charley.

"Yes; and when they did not fall down and worship the image, plenty of accusers hurried to the King to report them. Nebuchadnezzar was very angry and summoned the three faithful and fearless men before him. He offered them another chance. If they would fall down and worship the idol, well; if not, they were to be cast at once into a burning, fiery furnace."

"That was a tight pinch for 'em!" said Charley, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"They did not hesitate about it, though, but frankly told the King they would not worship his image. That made the King furious. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual; then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were bound and tossed into the fire, which was so hot that it killed the men who threw them in; but they three——"

"Were not hurt at all!" exclaimed the children, as Grandpa paused for them to end his story.

"And why not hurt?" asked he.

"Because," said Mary, "the Son of God joined them and took care of them."

"And what effect had this on the King?" asked Grandpa; to which Mary replied:

"When he saw four persons loose in the fire he called them out, and out came the three Hebrews, without so much as the smell of fire on their clothes. Then the King praised their God and ordered that everybody should serve Him."

"Well told, Mary! In my absence you can become the chief storyteller for the family. These men braved a fearful death for the sake of doing their duty and serving God. Many years after this Daniel braved death in the den of lions rather than—do what?"

"Stop praying," answered all.

"Yes. Envious men made that plot and had him cast to the lions because he would keep on praying."

"Who was King then?—Nebuchadnezzar?" asked Charley.

"No; he had become old and had died; Belshazzar had followed him and had been killed; Darius then became King, and he it was who was trapped into casting Daniel to the lions. But the Son of God was with Daniel and the lions did not hurt him. All night Darius worried about what he had done, and early in the morning he went to see what had happened. To his delight he found Daniel safe. In a few minutes he was taken up out of the den and the men who had accused him were cast in. So hungry were the lions that before the men fairly reached the floor of the den the beasts had seized them and were crunching their very bones to fragments."

"Whew!" exclaimed Charley; "that's where they got their pay in full—wasn't it?"

At this point Grandpa unrolled an engraving and spread it on the table, saying, "There is a picture of Daniel in the lions' den. Look at it carefully, and see whether it agrees with what I have told you."

"Why, no!" shouted Charley. "Here is an angel pulling a man's hair, while the man is bringing a bowl of soup to Daniel. And then the walls are so low that any respectable lion could bounce out."

"There's the King peeping in," said Carrie. "The lions don't seem happy except this big fellow, who is picking a man's bones."

"The whole thing seems wrong to me," added Mary. "It is meant for some other story, or the man who made it didn't know what he was about."

"In the Apocryphal books of the Bible is an old legend about Daniel, and this picture represents that story. It says that Daniel

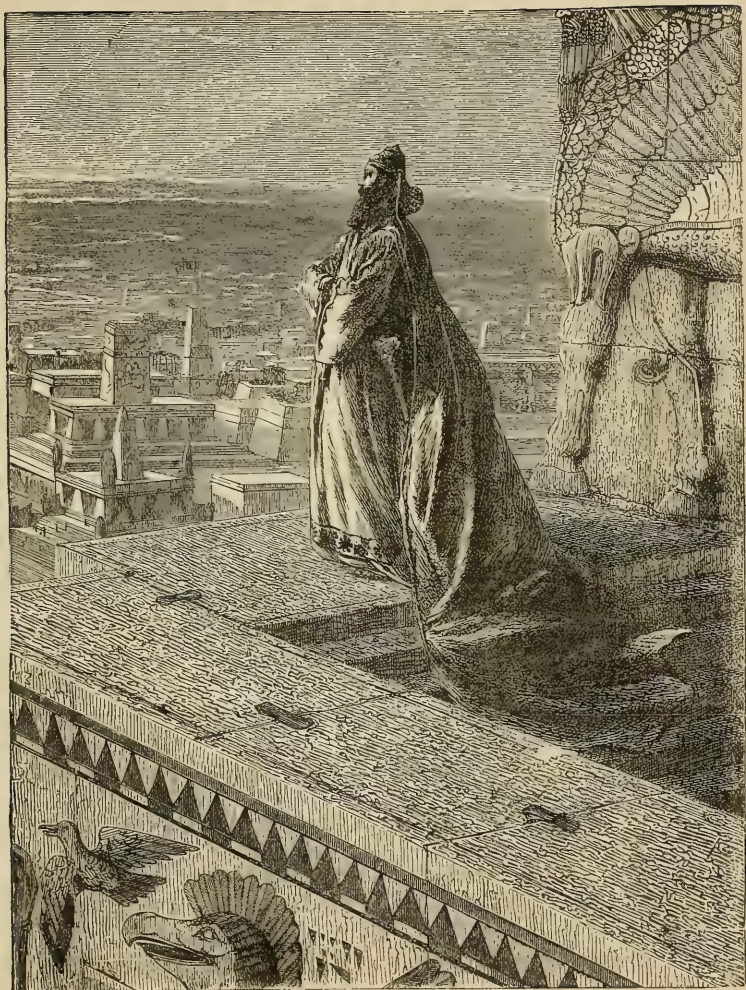
was left in the den six days, during which time the lions had no food at all, though usually two slaves and two sheep were cast to them each day. Daniel himself was near to starving until the angel of the Lord saw the prophet Habakkuk, away off in Judea, carrying dinner



LEGENDARY IDEA OF DANIEL AMONG THE LIONS.

to the reapers in his field. At once the angel seized him by the hair of his head, jerked him some four hundred miles into Babylon, and set him down in the den with Daniel, when the prophet cried, O Daniel, Daniel, take the dinner which the Lord hath sent thee."

"Ha. ha. ha!" shouted Charley. "And the soup wasn't spilt."



THE KING BOASTING OF HIS GREATNESS.

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE;

OR, PANIC AT THE FEAST.

"T O-MORROW I leave you for a few weeks. I will write to you while I am away, but do you think you can read my messages?"

"Why, Grandpa, of course we can," declared Carrie, earnestly. "I'd like to see a message from you that I couldn't read."

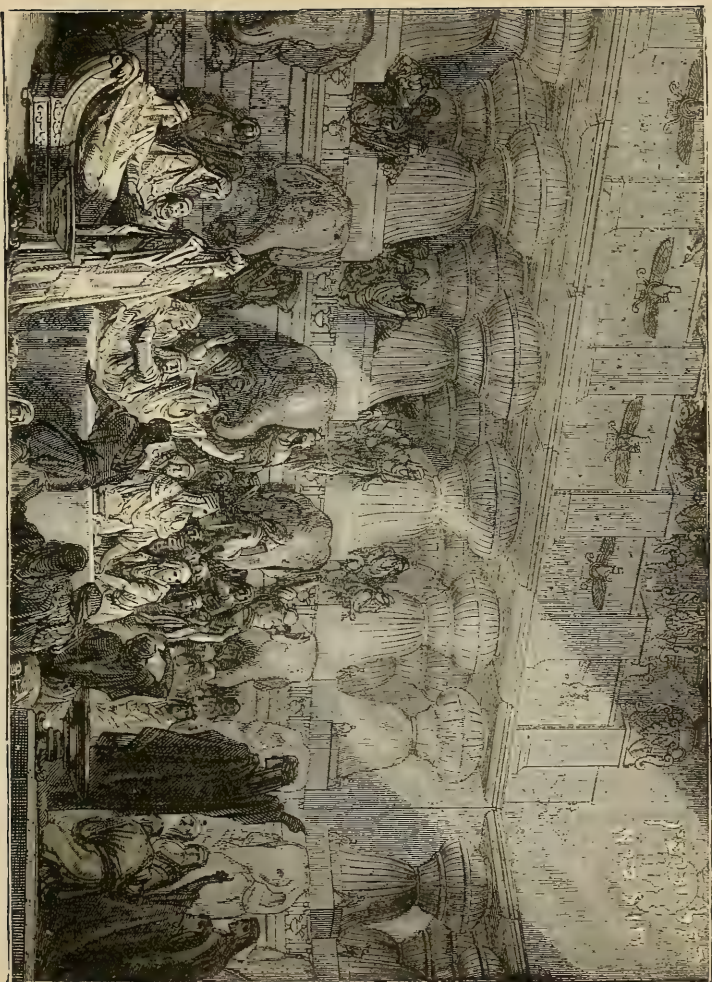
"Well, darlings, I suppose you will be able to do that, but before I am off I will tell you about a message that nobody could read except one man. It was not only a mysterious message, but it caused a fearful panic at a splendid feast."

"Where did it happen?" asked Charley.

"At Babylon, in the time of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar, of whom we have talked, was a great King, and he became very proud. It is said that he walked upon the palace where he dwelt in Babylon, looked out over all the splendors of that great city, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty? While he tickled his own vanity by such talk, God decided to humble him. He lost his reason and was turned out to live among the beasts of the fields. At last God restored his reason, and as an old man he was both humble and devout. Years passed by, and one of his descendants, probably his grandson, Belshazzar by name, sat upon the throne. He was proud, wicked, and rich. He cared little for good men, and hardly knew that Daniel still lived."

"Where was Daniel then?" inquired Carrie.

"He was in Babylon, probably in the palace itself, but not in honor



INTERPRETING THE MYSTERIOUS CHARACTERS.

or prominence. One day Belshazzar gave a grand feast. A thousand nobles were present, with royal ladies and many others, as spectators. They had plenty of wine, and, as the King felt its power, he ordered that the gold vessels once used in the Temple at Jerusalem be brought into the banquet-room, that wine might be poured into and drank from them."

"Wasn't that very wicked?" asked Mary.

"To be sure it was. They were sacred to God and His service, but the King wanted them for the vilest purposes. They were brought, and men and women drank wine from them and cracked their drunken jokes over them."

"What a shame!" exclaimed Carrie. "And to think that women would do such things."

"They were old heathens, Carrie—that's what ailed them," said Charley in explanation.

"It was in the midst of this drunken revelry," resumed Grandpa, "that the mysterious message of which I spoke arrived."

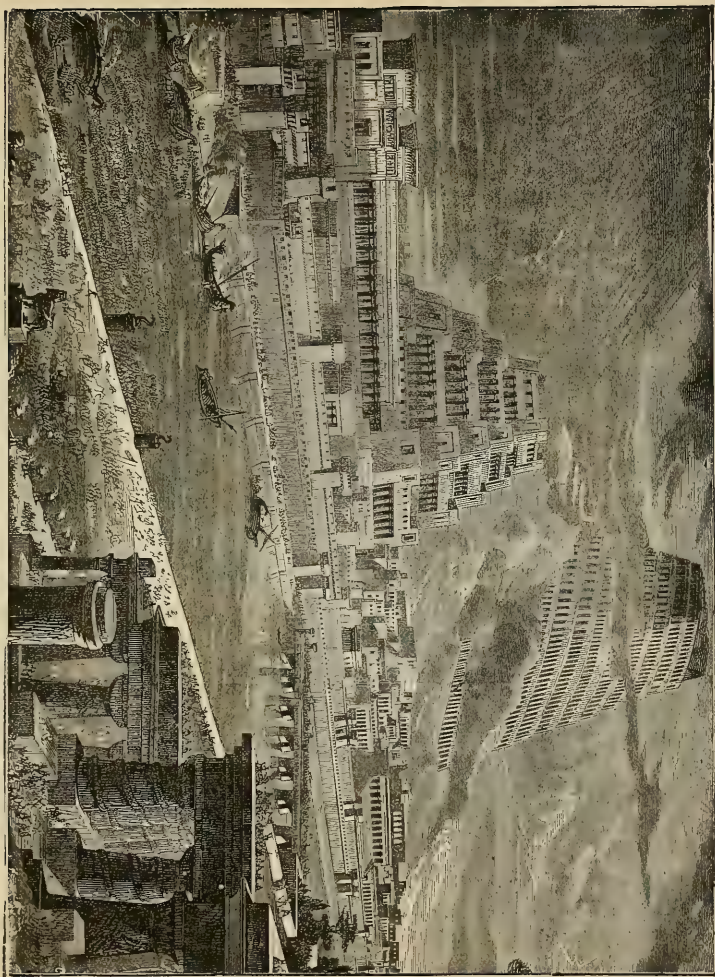
"By telephone?" asked Charley.

"No, nor by telegraph nor by post," replied Grandpa, "but by a far more impressive messenger. Mary may read of it from Daniel v, 5, 6."

Mary read these words: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the King's palace; and the King saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the King's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another."

"Hey, boys! That was a scare, sure enough," said Charley, seriously.

"Then the King called for his wise men, and promised immense rewards to any one who could read the message and tell what it meant. They came, they tried, but they failed. Not one of them could read the writing, much less tell the meaning of it. Everything



DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON.

was in confusion; everybody was in terror; and there glared that strange message on the wall where all could see."

"Why didn't they hunt up Daniel then?" asked both the girls.

"That's what others thought in this terrible moment, so he was called. He came, and he read the words. They were Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. They meant that God had weighed that King in the balances and found him wanting, and for this reason his kingdom was divided and taken from him."

"And was that all so? Did he lose his kingdom?"

"Yes, Mary. Even while Daniel was speaking the soldiers of the Medes and Persians were advancing on the palace, having stolen into the city while the soldiers protecting it were drunk. In a few minutes the invaders broke in upon the frightened crowd; blood flowed instead of wine; groans were heard instead of laughter; and that night the great, proud, wicked Belshazzar was slain, and his kingdom was divided between the conquerors."

"Dear, dear me!" exclaimed Carrie, almost crying; "somebody is always in trouble."

"How did they steal into the city while the soldiers were drunk?" inquired Charley, anxious to get more of the fight.

"The river Tigris flowed through the city. Along each bank were high, strong walls. Here and there along the walls were gates with bridges connecting the two sides of the river. Above the city there were great reservoirs, into which the water could flow when the river was higher than was safe for the city, and from which there was a new channel to carry the extra water away. The soldiers who were encamped against the city dug a new and deep canal from the river into these reservoirs, and so the water of the river was turned out of its regular course, leaving the channel almost dry. Then the soldiers waded along the stream, clambered on the bridges, killed the drunken guards at the gates, entered the city, killing and burning all before them until the palace itself was reached. Then the King and all his nobles were slain, and the conquering Cyrus took the throne."

WONDERFUL BABES; OR. THE KING AND HIS HERALD.

AFTER several weeks of absence Grandpa was once more at home, and the children besieged him for a new series of stories. He willingly consented, and after arranging a few business matters began his old style of after-supper talks in the sitting-room.

"I will tell you to-night," said he, "about the two most wonderful babes the world ever saw. Who were they?"

Guessing was lively for a few minutes. All agreed that one was Jesus, and after some delay Grandpa said the other was John the Baptist.

Then Charley began: "I know Jesus was a great man, and so was John the Baptist, but I didn't know they were anything great as babies."

"I learned in my mythology," said Carrie, "that when Hercules was a baby two big snakes crept into his cradle to kill him, but he squeezed them both to death."

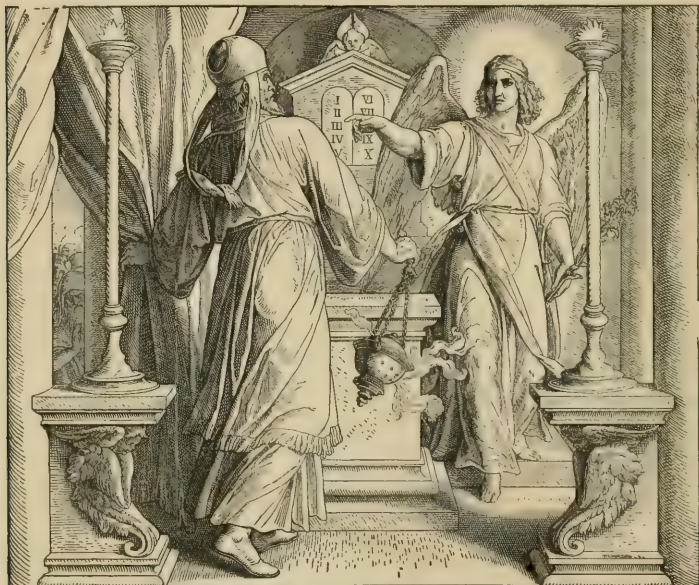
"He was a bouncing baby!" exclaimed Charley. "Good for him! He ought to join a dime museum."

"That story is told concerning Hercules, I know," replied Grandpa; "but we have no evidence that it is true. Neither Jesus nor John were great in that way, however; and yet there were wonders about their early days which far excel every other case."

"What were those wonders?" asked Mary. "Tell us about them Grandpa."

"In the first place, God foretold their birth, sending angels to their

parents to tell them about the coming boys—what their names should be, how great they should become, how much good they would do, and many other strange things. Zacharias, the father of John, was a priest. One day he was on duty in the Temple, when



*"There appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense."—
Luke i, 11.*

suddenly an angel appeared and told him of John. Zacharias doubted the angel's message and asked for proof of what he said. So the angel told him he should be dumb until this promise should be fulfilled in the birth of John."

"And did he become dumb?"

"He did, Carrie, and remained so for many months. When the baby was born and Zacharias had written his name in the family record, then he spoke again and praised God, whom he had learned fully to believe."



"Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."—Luke i, 39, 40.

"And did an angel go to the father of Jesus, too?"

"Yes, Charley; both to his father and his mother—to Joseph and Mary—and they were told about the wonderful son they should have. They were very glad because God intended to honor them so highly. To be the mother of Jesus and to be father to the King

of Kings were indeed high honors. Mary was so happy that she started off on a long journey to see Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias, who was her cousin, and these two holy women rejoiced together, you may be sure. Elizabeth felt herself honored that Mary, the appointed mother of the Lord, should come to see her, and her first greeting, as she bowed before Mary, was, Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Mary's answer to Elizabeth was full of tenderness and love. Mary made a long stay with Elizabeth, and after John was born went back to her own home."

"I don't wonder Mary was happy," said Carrie. "It makes me happy to think about Jesus."

"And it made others happy to see Him, even as a little baby. The people of that day used to take little babes to the Temple and offer a sacrifice for them. Joseph and Mary did this for Jesus, taking a pair of doves for their sacrifice, because they were too poor to buy a more costly offering. There was a good old man named Simeon, who had been assured that he should live to see the long-expected Saviour. He was in the Temple when Jesus was brought in. At once he recognized Him as the Christ, and, taking Him in his arms, he blessed Him, sure that this was indeed the one of whom the Scriptures had said so much."

"What did His mother say to all this honor they showed her baby?" asked Mary.

"We are not told what she said," answered Grandpa, "but we are told that she kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

"What is pondered them?" inquired Charley.

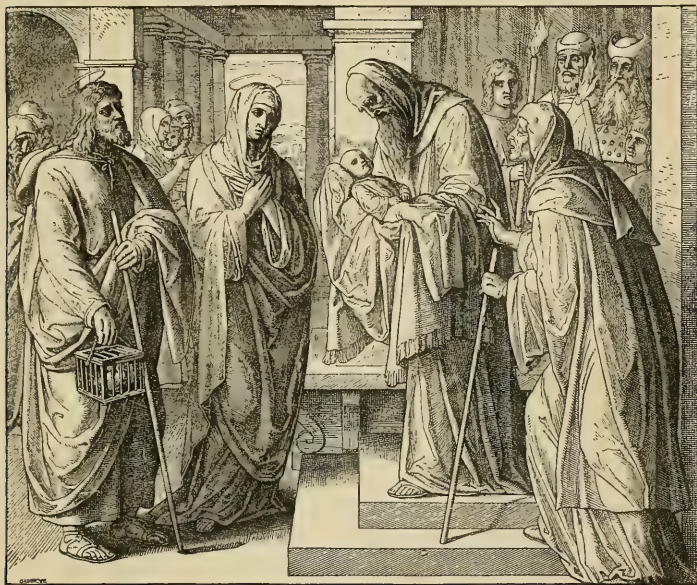
"Thought carefully over them, remembered them. She knew something of the great work He came to do, and she watched every little thing even which bore on it, just as any other mother watches every little thing bearing on the welfare of her children."

"How did Simeon know who this baby was?" asked Mary.

"God taught him, doubtless. And a holy woman there, Anna by name, was made sure of the same fact, and joined in praising God."

"Well, those were wonderful things," said Mary; "but there were other strange occurrences, too, when Jesus was born."

"Yes; and some of those I will tell you of to-morrow night if we be spared. Meanwhile, read in the opening parts of the gospels just what is said about the Saviour's birth."



"Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God."—Luke ii, 28.

"I shall read them all," answered Mary.

"And I, too," said Carrie; while Charley roguishly added: "I needn't bother then. You girls can tell me all about it."

CHRISTMAS CAROLS:

OR, HEAVEN AND EARTH REJOICING.

"GRANDPA," began Carrie, "you have not told us about the angels who sang when Jesus was born. That is a very sweet story; I read it again to-day."

"It is, indeed, delightful. I did not omit it as unimportant or uninteresting, but so that I could save it all up for to-night. That day when the angels sang was the world's first Christmas, the first birthday of Jesus. His parents were at Bethlehem on business. They had no place to stay but at the little inn or hotel, and even there they had to put up with a sleeping-place in the stable, where cattle were sheltered in the wet and cold season. There Jesus was born, and the feed-trough, or manger, was made up as a little bed, and in it the Lord of all was laid."

"Is that stable standing now, Grandpa?" asked Mary, eagerly. "A gentleman who addressed our Sunday-school said he had been to the very place where Jesus was born."

"The stable does not exist to-day, but the spot where it stood is quite certainly known. It is included in a great building called the Church of the Nativity. There is a long, narrow, vaulted room called the Chapel of the Nativity. In it thirty-eight lamps are kept burning continually. Just beside its entrance is a small vaulted recess, where sixteen silver lamps burn all the time. The floor is marble, and at its centre is a silver star with the inscription, Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. This undoubtedly is the spot to which the gentleman referred."

"And was Jesus really born just there?"

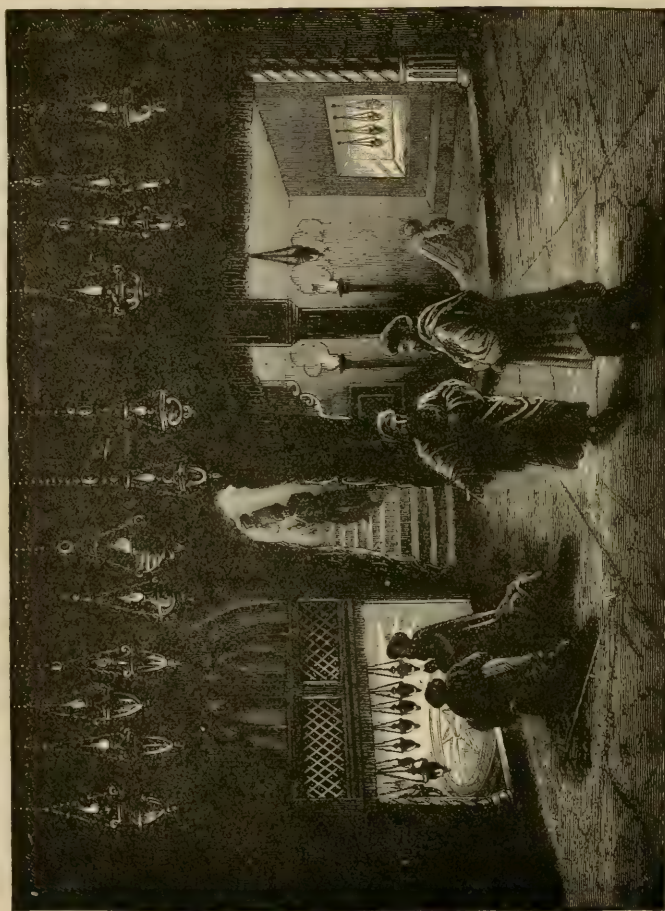
"Yes, Mary, I think we may fairly say so. The place where the manger was and that where the wise men knelt when they came to worship Jesus are also pointed out in the same great building."

"How I should like to see it!" exclaimed the girls together. Charley added his emphatic "Me too."



"Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them."—
Luke ii, 9.

"A little to the east of Bethlehem lies a beautiful and very fertile piece of country known as the Valley of the Shepherds. There it was, in all probability, that the shepherds were watching their flocks when the angel suddenly appeared and told them of the Saviour's



CHAPEL OF THE NATIVITY, IN CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY AT BETHLEHEM.

birth. There it was that the angel was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

"What a splendid sight that must have been!" said Mary. "A



"And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."—Luke ii, 17.

multitude of angels—that means a great crowd of them, don't it? And all praising God! Why, the shepherds must have thought themselves in heaven."

"And what a splendid sound, too!" said Carrie. "Just to think of a choir of angels singing!"

"When the angels had ended their Christmas carol they went away into heaven and left the shepherds in darkness, which, doubtless, seemed all the darker for the glory which had just passed from them. But though in the dark and chill of night there was light and joy in their hearts. So they said, Let us go to Bethlehem and see for ourselves. To Bethlehem they hurried, and there they found the babe just as the angel had said. Then they hurried to their friends and neighbors, telling everybody what had come to pass."

"How grand!" said Mary.

"Everywhere the people wondered as the story of the wonderful babe was told. Heaven was glad and earth was glad, for the Lord had come to save His people. Visitors from all parts went to see for themselves, and they all came back rejoicing."

"I wish I could have gone," said Carrie. "I love little babies now, and Jesus must have been just sweet."

"Let us in honor of the Lord sing a Christmas hymn. Here is a splendid one to Harwell, a grand old tune," said Mrs. Reed. Then they gathered about the organ and sang:

"Hark! what mean those holy voices
Sweetly sounding through the skies?
Lo! th' angelic host rejoices,
Heavenly hallelujahs rise.
Hear them tell the wondrous story,
Hear them chant in hymns of joy—
Glory in the highest! glory!
Glory be to God most high!

"Peace on earth, good-will from heaven,
Reaching far as man is found;
Souls redeemed and sins forgiven,
Loud our golden harps shall sound.
Christ is born, the great Anointed;
Heaven and earth His praises sing;
Oh! receive whom God appointed
For your Prophet, Priest, and King."

LED BY A STAR;

OR, A LONG WAY TO WORSHIP.

"GRANDPA," began Carrie, "who were the wise men who came to see Jesus? I read about them yesterday and have often wondered who they were."

"They were good and wise men who lived in distant countries to the east of Palestine—possibly in Persia. They spent much time in studying the stars, and every new appearance in the skies they took as a sign of some new and important event. While at their home in the far East they saw a wonderful star to the west of them. They knew that in the direction of this star lay Jerusalem, the chief city of the Jews, and that the Jews were expecting a king to be born who should set them free from the Romans, who had conquered them. Believing that God taught them this by the star, and anxious to do honor to this new King, these good men started on their camels across the desert between them and Jerusalem, traveling by night to avoid the heat of the sun, looking ever to the wonderful star; and so they were led a long way to worship the new King, who was really the King of all kings and the greatest person ever born."

"Don't we know anything more about these wise men?" asked Mary.

"Many things are told of them; but we really are not sure of their correctness. It is said there were three of them and that they were kings. Their traditional names are Caspar, Melchior, and Baltazar. Three bodies, believed to be those of these three men, were brought in the fourth century from Jerusalem to Constantinople by the Empress Helena. They were afterward taken to Milan, and in 1162 to

Cologne, where they still remain in the great Cathedral of that city. They are for this reason generally spoken of as the Three Kings of Cologne."

"But were they really kings, Grandpa?"

"Possibly so, Mary. A prophecy in Psalm lxxii refers to kings offering the Lord gifts and falling down before Him. This was done literally by these men. Turn to Matthew ii, 11, and see what it says."

Mary did as directed, and read as follows: "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

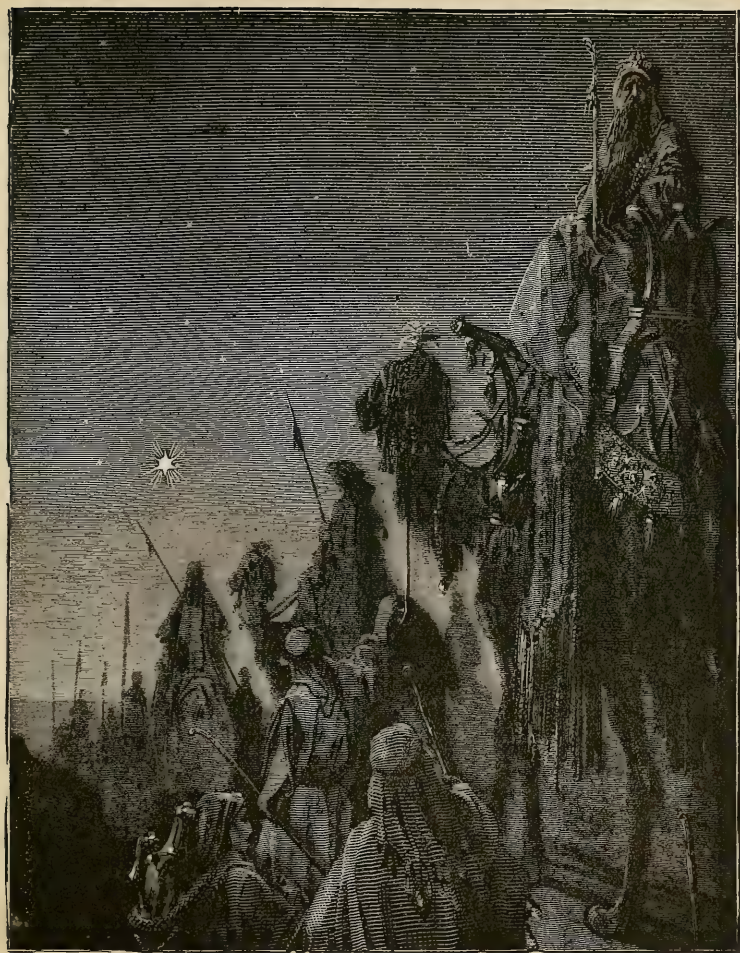
"But were there only three of them, Grandpa? I've seen pictures with lots of men."

"Three kings, Charley, would not travel without lots of men to wait on them and take care of their camels. But men who make pictures do not know any more about these things than other folks. All that any one can do about it is to get at what history or tradition says, and then judge what is true. I am content to believe that there were three and that they were kings. However this be, they had one commendable quality—they came a long way, with great toil and at great cost, that they might honor the Lord. If we were as willing to serve Him it would be well for us and for those about us."

"Don't you remember," began Mrs. Reed, "the Christmas hymn with the chorus beginning, O Star of Wonder! Star of Night?"

"Why, yes; but I never understood it," said Mary.

"Well, come," replied her mother, "let us understand it and then sing it. The first verse is supposed to be sung by the Kings themselves, all their attendants joining with them in the chorus. The second verse is the address of the first King, Caspar, for instance; the third verse is the address of Melchior; the fourth of Baltazar; the fifth verse all sing together. Now, Mary shall be Caspar; Car-



FOLLOWING A STAR.

rie, Melchior; Charley, Baltazar. Grandpa and I will be the servants and help on the chorus. Are you ready?"

"Yes," they all shouted. So Mrs. Reed struck the chord, and right merrily, if not so artistically, they sang the old words as follows:

"We three Kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts, we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

CHORUS.

"O star of wonder! star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

"Born a King in Bethlehem plain;
Gold I bring to crown Him again
King forever—ceasing never
Over us all to reign.—O star, etc.

"Frankincense to offer have I—
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship Him, God on high.—O star, etc.

"Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying—
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.—O star, etc.

"Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice;
Heaven sings 'Hallelujah';
'Hallelujah,' the earth replies."

PUZZLING HIS TEACHERS;

OR, YOUTH WISER THAN OLD AGE.

“WHAT you have told us about Jesus as a baby,” began Carrie, “was very interesting. Do we know anything about Him as a little boy?”

“Not as a little boy,” answered Grandpa, “but as a boy twelve years old we have a story of Him, however. It shows how He once puzzled His teachers.”

“We know more about Him as a baby, though, don’t we, Grandpa?” asked Mary.

“Well, what, my dear, do you know about him as a baby?”

“Why, how Herod wanted to kill Him; but God warned Joseph and Mary and they took Jesus off into Egypt, and then Herod killed a lot of boy babies, hoping to get rid of Jesus in that way. Then Herod died and God sent Joseph back into Palestine, and he went to Nazareth and lived there, and——”

“Well; anything more?”

“No; I guess that’s about all I know,” replied Mary, with a smile.

“It’s more than I knew,” added Charley, in a subdued voice and with a shrug of his shoulders.

“It is about all anybody knows,” said Grandpa, “and it is all one needs to know, else God would have taught us more. But where did Jesus go when He was twelve years old?”

“To Jerusalem, with His father and mother and a great lot of folks from Nazareth. I read it last night in the second chapter of Luke; but they went there to a feast, and that I don’t understand.”

“It was the feast of the Passover, to which all the men of Israel

were required to go. But Joseph was accustomed not only to go himself, but also to take his family with him. He lived at Nazareth. Jerusalem was about seventy miles off, and they had to walk all the way. From four to six days were needed for a company of men, women, and children to make the journey. But good people would come from all parts of the land, bringing lambs and birds and other animals for sacrifices and offerings."

"How funny it must have seemed to see people walking so far and taking those animals with them," said Mary.

"Oh! they had happy times as they went. Many of the Psalms were written as marching songs, and as the people went they sang, and so served God on the way as well as at Jerusalem."

"I think that was nice, Grandpa. It was like our Sunday-school marching days, when we all turn out in our best clothes, with music and singing and banners, and all that."

"Something like that, Carrie. But Jesus thought less of the marching than He did of learning the truth, and so, when His people were about to start home, He forgot them and stayed in the Temple listening to the great doctors or teachers of the Scriptures. There He sat with them hearing what they said and asking them questions, while every person who heard Him was amazed at His questions and answers on the hard subjects of which the doctors talked. In that case the boy of twelve years was wiser than the teachers."

"Where was His mother all this while?"

"On her way home, Charley. She supposed Jesus was with the other boys jogging along homeward. When it came time to fix their camp for the night Jesus was not there. They looked for Him, but He could not be found. The next morning they started back to the Temple, and there He was, busy with His teachers, and seeming not to know that He had caused any anxiety by His love of instruction and His stay in the Temple."

"He oughtn't to have done that, ought he, Grandpa?"

"So His mother thought, Carrie, and she gently chided Him for it;

but Jesus explained that He was about His heavenly Father's business, and that satisfied His mother."

"That would satisfy any good mother," said Mrs. Reed, in her tender way. "Any mother would be happy to see her children doing God's work."



"They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions."—Luke ii, 46.

"That's so," responded Charley, shaking his head approvingly. "That's good business for boys."

"And then what, Grandpa?" asked Carrie, eager for the story to go on.

"Then Jesus went home to Nazareth, where He grew in body and in mind, and was loved by every one who knew Him, and by God also, for see what is said in the last verse of the second chapter of Luke."

Mary read: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

"That is splendid," said Carrie. "But, Grandpa, was Jesus a carpenter?"

"His father was. Jesus was subject to His parents, we are told, which seems to mean that He worked for and with them. In Mark's Gospel He is called a carpenter. So I have no doubt that Jesus really was a carpenter by trade."

"Did He ever play like other boys?" asked Charley.

"Why shouldn't He?" asked Grandpa. "Are boys' plays wicked?"

"Some of them are, I'm afraid."

"Well, that kind Jesus did not play, Charley. But I think Jesus did all that any pure and noble boy usually does. When you play, fancy the boy Jesus to be with you. What He would join you may do. When He would stop you should not go on."

"Well, that's a new idea," said Charley. "Play as Jesus would play—I'll try it to-morrow, sure."

"Girls, too, may try that," said Carrie, "and I, for one, will do it," to which Mary added her promise also.

"Glad of these good intentions," replied Grandpa. "I hope they will be fully carried out. And now, by way of amusement, I will tell you a few old legends about the boyhood of Jesus."

"What are legends, Grandpa?" asked Carrie and Charley together.

"They are accounts, or stories, which are not certainly true—some of them are certainly false. Those I tell you are probably false, but I tell them, as I said, for amusement rather than for instruction."

"Go ahead, Grandpa," broke in Charley; "we won't believe anything we oughtn't to."

"One story is that Joseph, the father of Jesus, was engaged by King Herod to make a new throne. He did it, and Jesus helped him take it to its place and set it up. When there, alas! it was too short, and Joseph was much distressed by the blunder. But Jesus told him not to worry, and taking hold on the end of the woodwork, He drew it out to the proper length, much to His father's relief."

"Good boy!" exclaimed Charley, with a vigorous slap of his hand on his own knee. "He's the kind to have around."

"Another legend tells of His first day in school. The master began to teach Him the Hebrew alphabet. Pointing to the first letter, the master said, Say Aleph. Jesus did so. Say Beth, said the teacher, pointing to the second letter. So they went on till directly some question arose as to the correct pronunciation. Jesus was positive the teacher was wrong, and the teacher raised his hand to strike Jesus, but immediately his arm withered away. Then Jesus began and recited the entire alphabet, telling the teacher many things he never knew about it, until he in amazement said the boy had no need to come to him to learn, and begged Joseph and Mary to take Him away from school."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the irrepressible Charley, fairly squirming with delight. "So He gave the old man the grand bounce, did he? Good boy once more! Hip, hip, hoorah!" So Charley let off his superfluous spirits, while the family laughed heartily at his comical view of the case.

A BACKWOODS PREACHER; OR, CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS.

"GRANDPA, we have enjoyed your talks about Jesus ever so much," said Mary; "but we have been talking among ourselves about John, the other wonderful babe. What became of him?"

"We know nothing of him until God sent him to the Jordan to preach and baptize."

"Who was there to whom he could preach at the Jordan? That seems a queer place for one to go to preach."

"But it was really a good place. The river had to be crossed at certain shallow places, as we cross our rivers at fords or at ferries. At these crossing-places people were continually passing and re-passing. Then these places were far enough away from the cities to allow plenty of leisure for the people. They would stop and listen to John, and many would heed his words and be baptized at once. Indeed, so popular did he become in this backwoods, out-of-the-way place that people flocked to hear him from city and country alike, and great numbers submitted to his baptism and became his followers."

"Oh! I see," exclaimed Mary. "He would mount the rocks or the fallen trees or the stumps and preach—as we sometimes see street-preachers and the Salvation Army people do."

"Exactly so. And John was a faithful preacher. He warned people of all classes to repent and abandon their sins. Poor people—whether men, women, or children—came to hear him, and he taught them what to do; publicans—who were the tax-collectors of



A BACKWOODS PREACHER.

that day, and whom all men hated—came, and he taught them their duty; soldiers, too, were among his hearers, but he had good advice for them. One other thing he did; he kept telling all the time of One, mightier than himself, who was soon to appear, and who would do far greater and better things than had ever before been seen."



"And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, *And what shall we do?* And he said unto them, *Do violence to no man.*"—Luke iii, 14.

"He meant Jesus, of course, Grandpa," remarked Carrie.

"Yes; but he did not know certainly that Jesus was the great Saviour until Jesus came to him for baptism. He knew how holy Jesus was, and he said to Him then, I have need to be baptized of

Thee, and comest Thou to me? But Jesus insisted and was baptized. At that moment God spoke from heaven, calling Jesus His Beloved Son and bidding John to hear Him; the heavens opened, also, and the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended and rested on the newly baptized Jesus. Then John knew for certain that Jesus



"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God."—John i, 29.

was the Christ of the Old Testament, the long-promised Saviour who was to bless the world."

"How glad he must have been to learn that!" said Mary, "and to have the honor of baptizing the Saviour."

"Yes; but in an instant Jesus left John, went into the wild, uninhabited country near by, and was there communing with God and conquering the devil for forty days. All this while, however, John kept on declaring, There standeth one among you whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. Who this worthy One was he did not say. The people wondered, but John did not name Him until some forty days after the baptism of Jesus, when, as John stood with a company of his disciples one day, he saw Jesus coming toward him. Then John shouted, Behold the Lamb of God! who taketh away the sin of the world. In this way he introduced to his followers Jesus as the great Saviour."

"That was splendid!" exclaimed Carrie. "John was a grand preacher if he didn't have a city church."

"Yes; he was so true to his work, and so modest withal, that he spoke of himself not as a herald, nor a messenger, nor a minister, nor even as a man; but he said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. That was all he claimed to be—only a voice—a means whereby another made His mind known; an instrument by which God spoke to men."

"That was indeed modest. John must have been glad when he knew that the friend of his boyhood, Jesus, was God's own Son and the world's great Saviour."

"Yes, Mary," answered Grandpa. "And another grand point in John is, that he was bold as well as modest. He did not hesitate to reprove even his King for flagrant sin, though doing so cost John his liberty, and finally his life. He was thrown into prison for his bold rebukes, and Herodias, a very wicked woman whom King Herod had married, at last secured his death. Her daughter went in before the King and some company of his one day when they were all drinking and carousing, and she danced so charmingly before them that the King, in a boastful, bragging way, said he would give her anything she asked, even if it were half his kingdom. And what suppose you she did ask?"

"Jewelry, I guess, since she was a girl," said Charley, roguishly; "or else roller-skates."

"No, my boy. She asked that the head of John the Baptist be brought to her on a big silver dish."

"Horrors!" exclaimed Mary; to which Charley added the emphatic cry, "She get out!"—accompanying his words with a kick that probably would have helped her out had she received its force. Carrie sat silent, but looked very sad at the idea of a young woman asking such a ghastly reward.

"The King was sorry enough at this request," continued Grandpa, "for he really honored John. But having made a silly promise, he was silly enough to keep it; so he sent a soldier, who cut off John's head in the prison. The girl received the frightful gift and took it to the wretch she called mother."

"So that was the end of dear, good John!" said Carrie, who was on the verge of crying.

"The end of his life on earth, my darling. But his loving disciples took his body and buried it, and then went and told Jesus."

"Jesus was sorry, I know," said Charley.

"Yes. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and, I doubt not, at that of John also. But Jesus has comforted John since then, and John is satisfied. Jesus loved him, Jesus praised him, and he and Jesus are now together forever."

"John's death," said Mrs. Reed, "reminds me of Montgomery's beautiful poem—

"Servant of God, well done!
Rest from thy loved employ!
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

"The call at midnight came,
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame—
He fell, but felt no fear."

THE WONDERFUL WATER-JARS;

OR, SERVING HIS FRIENDS.

“**H**OW did Jesus begin His work?” asked Mary, when all were again ready for a new story.

“His first public act was a miracle done in the village of Cana, not far from Nazareth, where Jesus lived. There was a wedding-feast at this place, probably among the kindred of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and both He and she were present.”

“So Jesus went to wedding-feasts?” said Carrie, seemingly a little surprised at this festal side of His life.

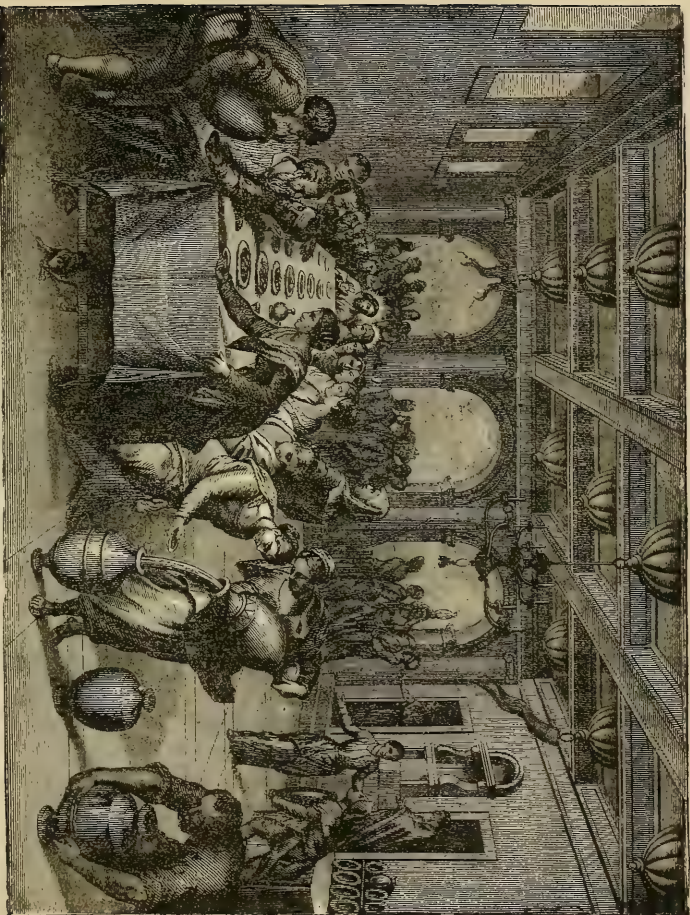
“O, yes! and to many other feasts, as you will see; but wherever Jesus was, whether at a feast or a funeral, He was always full of love and good works. At this feast His mother had charge of things. Many guests were there, probably more than had been expected, and so it happened that in the midst of their festivities the wine gave out, and there was no way to get more.”

“Wine!” exclaimed Carrie, in surprise. “Did Jesus go to a feast where they used wine?”

“He did; and that is not all of it, either, as you will see. Mary was not pleased that when she was managing affairs this awkward failure of the wine should occur—so she hurried to Jesus, no doubt confident that He would help her, and said, They have no wine. He did not promise to do anything to relieve the difficulty, but somehow she was sure He would, so she said to the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.”

“That’s a good text to remember,” said Carrie. “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. I like that.”

CHRIST'S WONDERFUL WORK AT THE WEDDING FEAST.



"And darling," added Grandpa, "it is the only thing on record that Mary ever said about her Son. To Him she said several things that are told us; of Him, so far as we know, she said this one thing only."

"What did He do about the wine?" asked Charley, seemingly impatient to get at the main point.

"Well, there were six large earthen water-pots standing near, and He told the servants to fill them to the brim with water. Off they ran to the neighboring spring; water was quickly brought, and the jars were filled. Jesus did not touch them nor say a word over them. He simply told the servants to draw from them, which they did, and lo! most excellent wine flowed out in abundance. So good was it, indeed, that guests who did not know at all whence it came pronounced it the best they had tasted for many a day. This was the Lord's first public act, and people were soon telling of it everywhere."

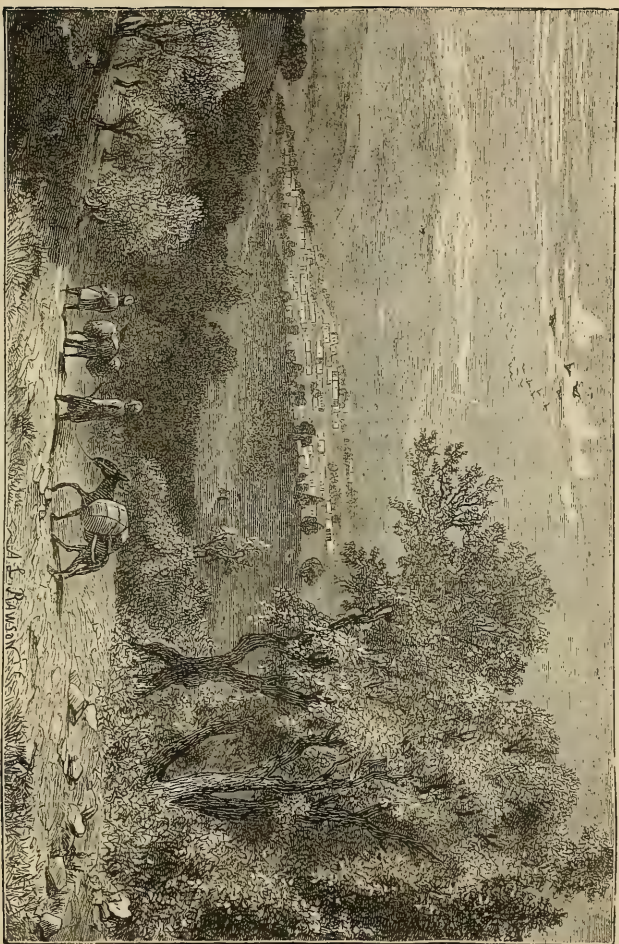
"I don't wonder," shouted Charley. "Guess I'd yell if I'd see a chap do that."

"But, Grandpa," interrupted Carrie, "wasn't it rather queer for Jesus to make wine? I don't think He was a very strong temperance man, or He wouldn't have done that."

"It is by no means sure that the wine Jesus made was such as the strictest temperance people would condemn. Pure juice of the grape was much used without the ferment, which makes it intoxicating. From such wine no harm could come. But even if a stronger wine was made, when used under the direction of Jesus no harm would come of it."

"No, I'm sure of that. If wine were used that way it would do no harm. He never would help people to get drunk."

"On the other hand, this miracle made good men believe that God had sent Jesus to teach them. One such man was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. One night he hunted up the place where Jesus stayed, and, calling on Jesus, said, We know thou art a teacher come from



CANA OF GALILEE AS APPROACHED FROM THE SOUTH.

God, for no man can do the miracles thou doest except God be with him. Had Jesus done what would make men drunken and vile, this good man would not have talked in this way."

"What did the people at the feast think of this miracle?" asked Mary.

"They praised the wine; they regarded the act as a glorious showing of the power of Jesus, and His disciples believed on Him all the more."

"None of them saw any harm in the wine then, did they?" asked Carrie.

"Not the slightest," answered Grandpa. "Jesus went about doing good, as was said of Him by those who knew Him best. He never favored wrong."

"Let me," said Mrs. Reed, "before we close, give a little sketch of Kefr Kenna, the village supposed to be that formerly called Cana, where Jesus did this miracle:—It is a neat village, pleasantly situated on the descent of a hill looking to the southwest, and surrounded by plantations of olive and other fruit trees. There is a large spring in the neighborhood inclosed by a wall, which is doubtless that from which the water was drawn at the time of our Lord's visit. Water-pots of limestone are still used in the neighborhood, and some old ones are shown as those which once contained the miraculous wine. Here are also the remains of a Greek church, said to stand over the house in which the miracle was performed."

"But these are not the real water-pots Jesus used, are they?" asked Carrie.

"Probably not. In the eighth century one pot only was shown there. In the time of the Crusades, four hundred years later, six jars, all said to be originals, were captured there and carried to France, where one of them is said still to exist in the Museum at Angers. But these claims are very unreliable. Nobody is sure that they are true."

CHOOSING COMPANIONS.

OR, HOW THE LORD GOT HIS HELPERS.

"**G**RANDPA, you spoke last night about a man named Nicodemus who was a friend to Jesus; was he an apostle?"

"No, Carrie. He was a ruler of the Jews; that is, a member of their great council, the Sanhedrim, about which we shall hear more as we talk on. He was a wise and honest man. He had known of Jesus and His miracles, which had convinced him that Jesus was certainly a teacher sent from God. Desiring to know more of God, he sought out Jesus that Jesus might teach and help him. Desiring no interference with his plans, he went by night and had a quiet, private talk with the Lord."

"How lovely that must have been!" exclaimed Carrie.

"Yes, it doubtless was so. There were many things Nicodemus could not understand, and he frankly said so; but Jesus explained them and taught him of God's wonderful love, and Nicodemus became a true disciple of Jesus, though not of the open, active sort that the apostles were."

"Did he ever do any great thing for Jesus?" asked Mary.

"One that we know of, but probably many more. He it was who with the rich man Joseph went to Pilate and begged permission to take the body of Jesus from the cross and bury it. This has immortalized his name in the early Christian history."

"That was noble, certainly," said Mary, "for almost everybody left Jesus then. But how did Jesus get His disciples at first?"

"So far as the apostles were concerned, Jesus gathered them to Himself in various ways."

"What is meant by apostles, Grandpa?" asked Carrie.

"The word means, men sent out. The name is specially given to those men whom Jesus sent out to preach and to work for Him."

"Who were they?" asked Charley.



"Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?"—John iii, 9.

"Mary may turn to Matthew x, 2-4, and read the answer to your question."

Mary read: "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew;

Thomas, and Matthew the publican ; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus ; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him."

"Did Jesus pay them anything?" asked Charley.



*"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying . . . As ye go, preach."—
Matthew x, 5, 7.*

"Not as pay is generally made for services. They were well paid in the sense of doing right, which they had, and in the pleasure of serving God. For other pay they had not where to lay their heads most of the time. Several of them gave up their business that they might be free to follow Jesus. Andrew, Peter, James, and John were

fishermen, but at the command of Jesus they left their nets and boats and followed Him. Matthew was a tax-collector, but he left his business also."

"They must have loved Jesus very much to do all this for Him," said Carrie.

"They did, but not more than many persons now love Him, and not more than all should love Him. He once said, Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Christ's chosen companions are willing to give up everything for Him."

"Who was the first apostle?" asked Mary.

"Andrew and John were the first who became disciples. Andrew brought Peter, his brother, to Jesus, and Philip was also called very soon. But directly Jesus made these men and others more than disciples, or *learners*, as this word means. He made them *apostles*, and sent them out to work."

"To work at what?" asked Charley.

"At preaching and doing good. They went without money, or any of the usual provision for such journeys, and the Lord took care of them. They were all familiar with the work of fishing, so Jesus said, I will make you fishers of men."

"Oh! yes," exclaimed Charley, "they would catch men for Jesus, wouldn't they?"

"That was their new business, and they went at it earnestly, and had good success. After Jesus left them, they preached everywhere. Paul was added to their number in the place of Judas, who betrayed Jesus and was lost, and by these men churches were planted all over the known world."

"And what became of these apostles?" asked Carrie.

"James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa I, as we learn in Acts xii, 1, 2. History tells us that both Peter and Andrew were crucified; also that John was thrown into a vat of boiling oil, but that he was preserved from harm, and afterward was banished to Patmos.

He survived this, however, and finally died a natural death at a good old age. Paul was beheaded at Rome. Bartholomew is said to have had the skin peeled from his body, and then to have been nailed to a cross. Their lot was by no means an easy one, you see, and yet they were faithful workers for the Lord."

"I don't see how they could stand it, to have so much that made life miserable and to look forward to martyrdom at its end," was Mary's very serious comment.

"I'd have given up," said Charley.

"I, too," said Carrie. "But how did they feel while living so?"

"How Paul felt he tells us in his last letter to Timothy," said Grandpa, drawing the Bible toward himself, "and this is doubtless a fair sample of the feelings of the others. Paul says this in II Timothy iv, 6-8: For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

"Did Paul write that when he was near death?" asked Carrie.

"Yes; when he was in prison; in chains; almost alone; and when he knew his head was to be severed from his body in a very few days," answered Grandpa.

"I don't see how he could write so beautifully. I'd do nothing but cry and scream if it were me," continued Carrie.

"Oh! no, my child," answered Grandpa, very tenderly. "If, like Paul, you were in such peril for having done your duty, like Paul, you would find comfort, and be just as happy as he was."

A DEN OF THIEVES; OR, THE RASCALS TURNED OUT.

"DID you ever know what a tremendous stir Jesus made in the Temple one day in the early part of His ministry?"

"Why, no, Grandpa," answered all the children. "What was it?—Do tell us."

"You remember Carrie's plan of the Tabernacle, with its Holy of Holies, its Holy Place, and its Court.* The Temple was on the same general plan, but it was a solid structure of stone—not a movable one of curtains and poles, like the Tabernacle. It had its Holy of Holies and its Holy Place. Around these was the Court of the Priests, where none but they and their helpers, the Levites, were permitted to enter. Around this was the Court of Israel, where the men of Israel who came to worship might stand. Beyond this was the court where the women and Gentiles might go—a court, in fact, that was common to everybody. This was the place where Jesus made the stir."

"What did He do there, Grandpa?" urged Charley, whose expectation was aroused for something lively.

"One day when the feast of the Passover was about to begin, Jesus went into this outer court of the Temple and found it crowded with tables and cages and stalls and all sorts of business contrivances. There were men with coins spread out, ready to make change, so that exact money could be had with which to make purchases or to make gifts to the Temple treasury. Oxen were needed for sacrifices, and right in the Temple were stalls, and rude cattle-

* See page 190.

dealers were there to make a trade with any purchaser; others were selling lambs and doves and provisions and catch-penny wares of all sorts."

"A sort of cattle show," said Mary, "or country fair—wasn't it, Grandpa?"



"And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple."—John ii, 15.

"Not unlike such gatherings; and of course this was very improper for the house of God. Jesus said, when He saw it, that while this place was called a house of prayer, these dealers had really made it a den of thieves."

"The people there were a rascally, cheating set, I guess," said Mary.

"Yes; they were there solely to make money—honestly if they could, but to make it at any rate. They had no respect for the place or its services. When Jesus went to the Temple and saw this He was full of indignation. Twisting up a bunch of cords into a scourge or whip, He charged on the money-changers and cattle-dealers, overturning their tables, spilling their goods, scattering their money, loosing their cattle, and driving the entire crowd pell-mell out of the Temple."

"Good!" shouted Charley; "served them right. But why didn't they turn on Him and bounce Him?"

"Don't you remember what the old proverb says?—The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion. He was righteous; they were in the wrong. He was not afraid; they were. Nor could any of the official guards of the Temple stop Him, for He was doing what they ought to have done long before, and they knew it. He was doing a good work for a good place when He turned out those base intruders."

"It seems odd to see Jesus having such a time with those men," said Carrie.

"I guess those chaps kept away after that. They wouldn't want to be whipped out that way many times."

"No, Charley. They made so much money there that they soon crept back, and later in His life Jesus did the very same thing over again. This was on the last day He spent in Jerusalem before His crucifixion. So He began His work by driving intruders from the Temple, and He ended it in about the same way."

"Too bad that they should act so, but it isn't very different from the way some act in church even now," said Mary, in a thoughtful way.

"One thing I don't understand, Grandpa. Those money-changers with their tables of money—who were they?"

"Glad you speak of it, Carrie. I will explain. The law of Moses required that every male of Israel who was twenty years old or over should pay into the sacred treasury each year a half-shekel. The richest paid no more—the poorest paid no less; and this sum must be paid in the sacred coin known as the half-shekel of the sanctuary."

"How much was a shekel?" asked Charley.

"The half-shekel which they gave was not far from thirty cents of our money. Of course, every person who paid his dues in this coin had to get it of a money-changer, who charged about three cents premium for his service in the case. At the time of feasts, therefore, when many visitors came to the Temple, these coin-dealers would drive a brisk trade and make lots of money."

"I see!" exclaimed Carrie. "And the cattle and lambs would be bought at good prices, with lunches, peanuts, apples, and all such notions."

"I'm not sure about the peanuts and apples, darling; but you have the idea correctly. Just as about parades, shows, and crowds of all kinds with us the vender of peanuts and other truck is found, so there. Purchasers for all sorts of things were at the Temple; that drew the sellers, also, that they might make money."

"Well, I hope Jesus gave them a slashing," said Mary. "They might have done their trading outside the Temple and have shown some respect for a sacred place."

"So Jesus thought; and thinking so He drove them out," said Grandpa.

WALKING ON THE WAVES; OR, THE LORD OF THE SEAS.

“**W**HAT was the trade of at least four of the Apostles?” asked Grandpa, in opening the conversation.

“Fishermen,” was the ready answer of the children.

“In what waters did they fish?”

“Jordan,” cried Charlie, but the others shouted “Sea of Galilee,” to which Charley said, “Oh! yes, Jordan’s where Naaman washed himself. I remember now.”

To cover Charley’s blunder, Grandpa kindly added, “The Sea of Galilee is really only a spreading out of the River Jordan, which enters it at the north and leaves it at the south.”

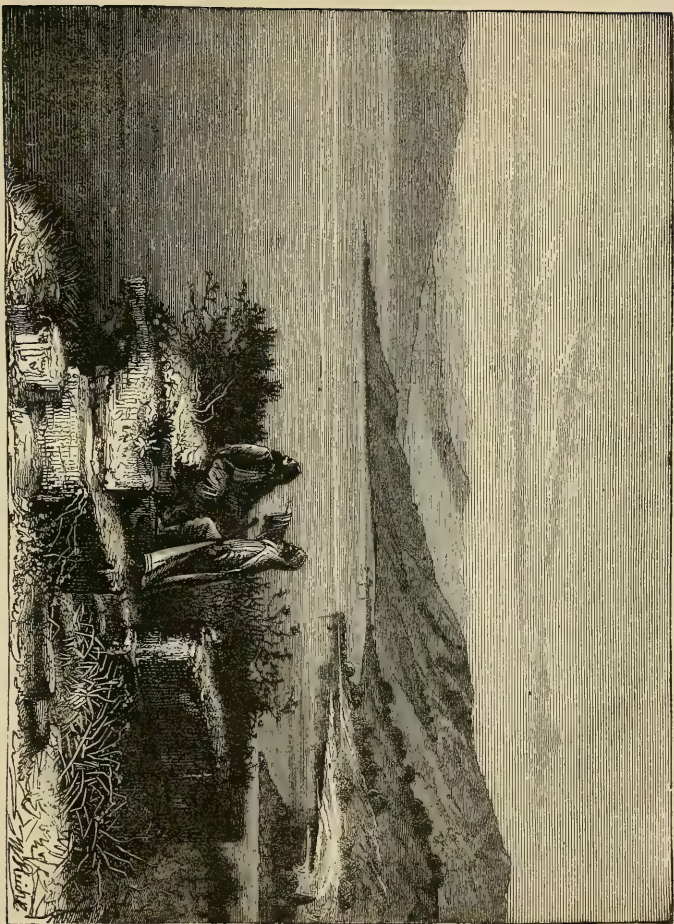
“Guess that’s what I meant,” laughed Charley.

“The Sea of Galilee is a beautiful lake,” resumed Grandpa, “some fourteen miles long by eight wide. It is surrounded by hills which are dotted with ruins and with little villages. It is very common for storms to come up suddenly on this lake, and the fishing-boats, wrongly called *ships* in our Bibles, are often upset or sunk.”

“I should think Peter and the other fishermen could manage boats, even if it did storm,” said Charley.

“They could do all that any men could, but the boats were clumsy and poorly built, and the winds were very severe, so that sometimes even Peter was at a loss to know how to save his boat. One time Jesus and the other Apostles were sailing with him; Jesus was very tired, so He had lain down and fallen asleep in the hinder part of the boat, His head resting on a pillow, or boat cushion. As they sailed on in the darkness, suddenly a gust of wind struck them and it rap-

SEA OF GALILEE VIEWED FROM THE SITE OF CAPERNAUM



idly became a regular tempest. The waters were rough; the wind was furious; the night was dark; the boat leaked and at every plunge she took in water; Peter and the others did all they knew, but it availed nothing; their boat was about to sink."

"And Jesus asleep all this while?" asked Carrie.

"Yes, dear; He was asleep. But they went and roused Him with the question, Carest thou not that we perish? That was not a happy question, but Jesus rose and simply said, as He gazed out into the darkness, Peace, be still. At once the winds hushed; the waves ceased; there was a great calm; the little party was safe."

"That was grand," said Carrie, with a sigh of relief.

"That's company worth having when you go sailing!"

"Yes, Charley, and worth having at any other time."

"Was that the time Peter tried to walk on the water, Grandpa?"

"No, Mary. On that occasion Jesus sent the disciples to cross the lake while He stayed behind that He might be alone to pray. Night came on and there was so strong a head wind that the boat made very little progress. Midnight passed and morning drew near, and still the boat had not reached the other shore; but then, to the amazement of all on the boat, the form of a person walking on the water was seen in the distance."

"Ugh!" exclaimed Charley; "that must have looked spookey."

"I judge it did look spookey, as you call it, for the men were all frightened. Such an appearance they had never seen, and in their surprise and fright they said, It is a spirit."

"Worse and worse," said Carrie. "If I didn't know what it was they saw, I should be scared myself."

"As they looked and wondered and shivered, the strange being spoke. Over the waters came a voice that could be heard clear and distinct above the rush of the wind and the splash of the waves. Be of good cheer, it said. Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. It was the well-known voice of Jesus. It was He who was walking on the water and proving Himself to be Lord of the seas."



WALKING ON WATER.

"How sweet!" exclaimed both girls at once.

"How sublime!" exclaimed Mrs. Reed.

"But what about Peter walking on the water?" urged Charley.

"When Peter knew it was Jesus who was coming, he asked permission to go to Him on the water, and the Lord said, Come. Peter started. It was a ticklish job for him to walk on the water, rolling up and down as it was. But he looked right at Jesus and pushed on."

"Go it, Peter!" exclaimed Charley.

"He did go it for a few minutes; then he noticed how the wind was blowing and how the sea was tossing, and he thought how deep its waters were, and he began to doubt. In an instant he began to sink. As he went down he cried out, Lord, save; I perish."

"And Jesus did it, didn't He?" said Carrie, with more of assertion than of question in what she said.

"Yes, He did it," answered Grandpa. "He reached out His hand and caught Peter; then, as He led him safely to the boat, He said, Wherefore didst thou doubt?"

"Sure enough," replied Mary. "Wherefore did he doubt when Jesus told him to come? It seems to me that I could walk on the water myself with such encouragement as he had, especially if I saw Jesus near me."

"And yet how hard it is," interrupted her mother, "for any of us to walk where Jesus bids us, even when we walk on the solid ground!"

"Well," responded Carrie, "I never knew what a grand Saviour Jesus was. For my part, I'll trust Him everywhere, and try to serve Him always."

At Mrs. Reed's suggestion, the party gathered at the organ and sang this verse from one of the old hymns:

"Begone, unbelief, my Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear;
By prayer let me wrestle, and He will perform,
With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm."

THE GREAT OCULIST; OR, SIGHT FOR THE BLIND.

“WHAT is an *oculist*, Grandpa?” This was Charley’s salute as he came in to supper somewhat late and considerably hurried. Without waiting for a reply, he ran on with his talk, saying, “The man who has moved into the corner has a new sign with *oculist* on it, and the boys say he is a fortune-teller. Is that what it means?”

“Why, no, my boy!” replied Grandpa, laughing heartily. “They are decidedly astray. An oculist is an eye-doctor, and many wonderful cures they make—which suggests that after supper we talk of the greatest oculist the world ever saw.”

“Good! good! good!” came from all sides of the table; and when supper was over the fulfillment of the promise was claimed at once.

“What did I say oculist meant?” asked Grandpa.

“A man who cures eyes,” was Carrie’s reply; which Charley followed up by asking, “Can he cure them if you’re blind?”

“That,” replied Grandpa, “depends on the cause of the blindness. If the eyes are destroyed, or if what is called the optic nerve is dead, there is no cure; but if the trouble be with the front of the eye—as in what is called cataract, where a film or skin grows over it like a curtain—then surgical skill may cure it, and does so in many cases. But the greatest oculist of the world did not use instruments or medicines. Indeed, when He lived such articles were hardly known. They could scarce have been had, even if wanted.”

“How did He cure eyes, then? If He had no medicine and no

cunning little knives I can't see how He did anything with them," said Carrie.

"He did it in various ways. Sometimes He simply touched the eyes of people who had been born blind and they saw at once."

"Oh! you mean Jesus. I know He did such things. No man ever did. But now you have aroused my curiosity, and I want to know more about how He gave sight to the blind," was Carrie's reply.

"The first account of the active work of Jesus tells of His going about in Galilee, teaching, preaching, and healing all manner of sickness; then we are told that they brought to Him from all parts the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and He healed them. How the people felt who saw these marvels Mary may read to us from Matthew xv, 31."

"The multitude wondered," began Mary, "when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."

"I should think they might well wonder, and glorify God, too, when they saw such work as that."

"Yes, Carrie; they could hardly fail of that. How Christ healed those blind persons we do not know. Among the first He restored to sight, however, were two blind men who followed Him, calling for mercy. At last He asked whether they believed He was able to heal them. They answered, Yea, Lord. Then He touched their eyes and at once they saw."

"Just touched them? Nothing more?" asked Carrie, with evident surprise.

"That is all. Another blind man was brought to him one day and they asked Jesus to touch him, as He had touched the others. But Jesus treated this man in another way. He took his hand and led him out of the town; then He wet the man's eyes with spittle, and asked him if he saw anything. The man said he saw men as trees, walking."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Charley, "I'd like to see trees walking."

"That would be a show, sure enough," answered Grandpa; "but what he saw was men walking about, and they looked as he imagined trees to look, big, and with no very clear outlines. He did not have clear, sharp vision. So Jesus put His hands on the man's eyes and then everything was clear."



"And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord."—Matthew ix, 28.

"Grand!" exclaimed Mary. "He was, indeed, a splendid oculist. The grandest of them all!"

"Who else was cured?" asked Charley.

"You have heard of Bartimeus, the blind man whom He healed

near Jericho. This man, with another, sat begging at the wayside when they heard the noise as Jesus passed by. Learning that this great eye-doctor was so near, they began to call at the top of their voices, begging that He would heal them. Jesus did not answer for a time, so they crowded ahead and called the louder, until the people told them to be quiet. But they would not be quiet. Then Jesus stopped and they came near to Him. What will ye that I shall do? said He. Lord, that our eyes may be opened, said they. Then Jesus spoke the healing command and they both saw clearly."

"Good!" shouted Charley. "Jesus did a big thing for them, and I suppose they did everything they could for Jesus and for every body else after that."

"I'm not so sure they did," answered Grandpa. "People are not always ready to do as they are done by. Turn to Matthew xviii, 23-35, Mary, and read a little story on this point."

Mary read this story of the servant, who though forgiven much would not forgive at all, and who was bound and sent away to punishment by order of his king. As she finished the reading Grandpa said: "So we see how they should do for whom much is done; and whether it be in opening eyes, or in forgiving sin, we should love and labor for the good of others."

"Who else did Jesus cure?" asked Carrie. "I do so love to hear about these kind acts of His, and whether those people He healed did better or not. I certainly want to do better, and mean to do better, for such a friend."

"He did so many kind acts," answered Grandpa, "that we could only hint at them to-night, so we will leave them rest and start again to-morrow. Good-night!"



CONDEMNED FOR INGRATITUDE.

GETTING AT THE DOCTOR;

OR, ODD WAYS OF GAINING A CURE.

“LAST night we talked about one line of healing which Jesus did. Borrowing a name from the sign Charley told us of, we called the Lord an oculist, because He did such wonders for the eyes of the blind. But now I want to tell you of other wonderful cures He made. He was the great Physician as well as the great Oculist. He cured all manner of diseases.”

“Tell us about some of them, please,” said Carrie, speaking for the little company.

“I’ll tell you about two cases, a man and a woman, both of whom had a hard time to get to the great Doctor. The woman had been sick twelve years and none of the physicians could do her good. She had spent all her money seeking a cure, but she was worse rather than better, and so, as a last resort, she determined to go to Jesus, of whose wonderful cures she had heard. There was a great crowd about Him as He passed along, and she, weak and sick as she was, was not able to force her way through. Then, too, she was modest about it, and so came up behind Him, for she said to herself, If I can touch His clothes even, I shall be cured. So she worked her way through the dense crowd, up close to Jesus, and touched His outer garment as He passed.”

“And did she really believe that would cure her?” asked Carrie.

“She did, and she was not disappointed, for at once she felt that she was made well. Jesus knew what had happened, though He did not see her, so He turned about and asked, Who touched my clothes?”



CURED DESPITE THE CROWD.

"That was a queer question to ask in such a crowd. I should think people were touching His clothes all the time."

"So they were, Mary; but this woman's touch was not of the ordinary kind. He knew what it meant. She was full of fear lest she had displeased the Lord by taking this liberty, but she frankly confessed all she had done, and He, instead of blaming her, commended her and sent her away a happy and well woman."

"That was an odd way of getting cured," said Mary, "and a queer way of getting at a doctor, too," added Carrie. "But what became of this woman?"

"We do not know," answered Grandpa. "She is one of the many whom Jesus blessed who sank out of sight at once. In the great future we may meet and greet many of these, but now we know nothing of them."

"What did the man do about the doctor?" asked Charley. "What ailed him?"

"He did very little, for the reason that he was helpless from the palsy, a disease which makes a man unable to help himself. He could not go to Jesus, so four men carried him, but when they got him there so great was the crowd in the house and about the door that they could not get anywhere near."

"That was too bad," said Carrie, in a sympathetic way. "And did they not get in at all?"

"Oh! yes, in an odd way. The houses there were built with flat roofs, up to which people went by an outside staircase. They carried the sick man up this to the roof. Jesus was in the central square or yard of the house, but over this was a light roof to protect it from the heat of the sun. That the men tore up, as they could with ease, and down over the heads of the crowd below they lowered their friend right into the presence of the Great Physician."

"Well, well!" exclaimed Mary, "they were real Yankees to think of such a way. The idea of breaking up the roof of a man's house! That was odd. And what came of their queer proceeding?"

"When Jesus saw how determined they were to get the man near to Him, He said to the man, Thy sins be forgiven thee. He knew the man was a sinner and was sorry for sin, so He began with that which was the worst and forgave his sins at once. But some who were there complained at His claim to forgive sin, so Jesus silenced them, and at the same time showed His power by commanding the man to arise, take up the bed upon which he had been brought there, and to walk away a well man. No sooner had Jesus said it than the man did it. Well and strong again, he picked up the couch on which he had been carried, and away he went through the wondering crowd, away to his home and surprised friends, while everybody said, We never saw it on this fashion."

"I guess not. There never was a doctor who could do such cures," was Mary's comment, while Carrie, after a moment's thought, added, "And the man's sins were forgiven, too. He must have been a happy man! Only think, he went home a cured man, and a Christian man."

"Oh! well," said Charley, in a thoughtful sort of way, "that was good enough for them, but we can't get to the Doctor in any such way."

"Why, yes we can," said Mary. "Let me read you a story." Turning to Luke xviii, 10-14, she read the story of the humble Publican who did get near to Jesus, while the haughty Pharisee was left unblest. When she had ended, Charley looked in silence for a moment, and then said: "That's a good way. I'll go to the Doctor that way; I will."

"I too," chimed in Carrie.



SEEKING THE TRUE PHYSICIAN.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND; OR, JESUS AMONG THE LITTLE ONES.

"GRANDPA," began Carrie, "I know that Jesus loves children. Won't you tell us about that to-night?"

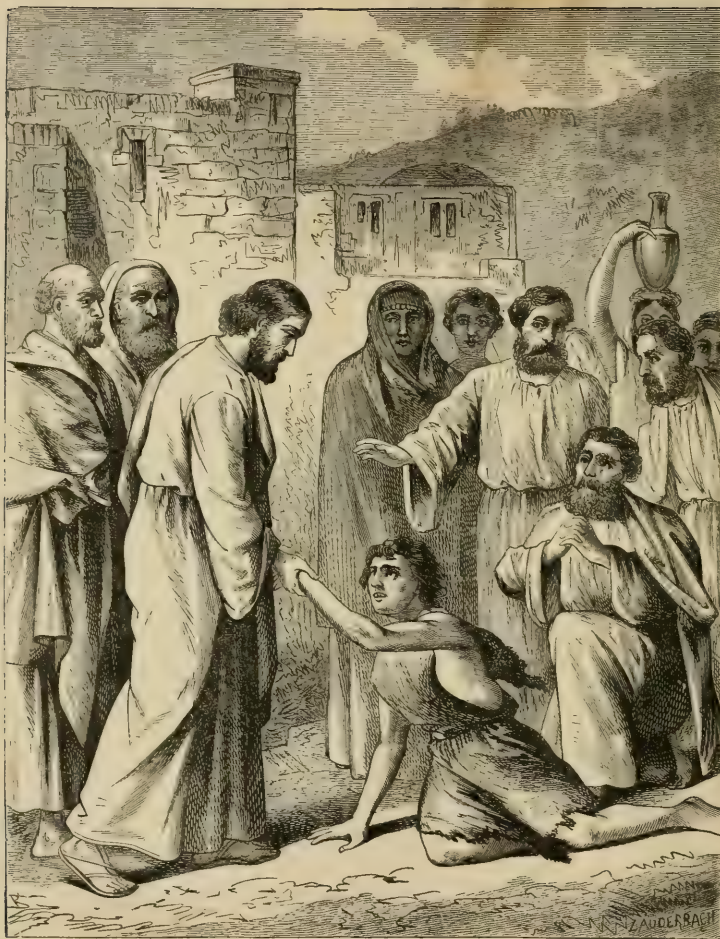
"Yes, darling, with pleasure. He was often among the little ones, and He always showed Himself the children's Friend. Mark tells in his gospel of a time when many women began to bring their children to Him that He might touch them. They knew His touch healed disease and restored sight, and they probably thought it had some magical power in it which would do the children good—as people say, give them good luck. So great a rush of this kind set in that the disciples rebuked the women, thinking to put a stop to it. But Jesus was displeased with their rebuke and spoke those memorable words, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

"It was real sweet in Jesus to be so kind to the little children," said Carrie. "Those disciples were in too big a hurry trying to stop them."

"This is the story," chimed in Mary, "that we sing about sometimes—

"I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How He called little children like lambs to His fold—
I should like to have been with Him then.

"I wish that His hand had been laid on my head,
That His arms had been thrown around me,
And that I might have heard His kind voice as He said,
Let the little ones come unto me."



A HELPING HAND FOR THE BOY.

"But," asked Charley, "did Jesus throw His arms about the children, Grandpa, or is that just hymn talk?"

"Mark x, 16, says, He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them. So it is not hymn talk, as you call it, Charley."

"I didn't mean to hurt the hymns a bit, Grandpa," said the boy, apologetically. "I only wanted to know if that was fun or earnest."

"Real earnest, my boy. Jesus did these very things. Another time a man brought to Jesus his son, who was a poor, miserable sufferer. His trouble was like what we call fits or spasms. He would suddenly fall and toss and tremble and foam at the mouth, and then be left so weak that he could hardly move. In time this disorder affects the mind, so that the sufferer becomes idiotic and unfit for work or for play."

"I know a boy who's that way," broke in Charley. "They call him Simple Mick, but I pity him ever so much."

"Such a person is to be pitied greatly," resumed Grandpa. "Jesus pitied this poor boy and cured him, but the boy, possibly having fainted, lay on the ground as if he were dead. Indeed, people said, He is dead. There he lay, thin, pale, dirty, ragged, and seeming to be dead; but Jesus came near and took him by the hand. Yes, he took hold of that poor, dirty hand, for the boy had been wallowing over the ground in a hard fit; then Jesus lifted him up, and the boy was all right."

"Ugh!" exclaimed Carrie, with a shudder. "I would have been afraid to touch such a boy."

"So would I," responded Mary; and Charley, even, put in his usual "Me, too."

"There is another beautiful instance of Jesus as the child's Friend in the case of the little daughter of a man named Jairus. She was very sick and her father hurried off for Jesus, the Great Physician. Jesus was ready and started at once to heal the child. As they went, however, a servant came running and told them that the little girl was dead. Her father was in great sorrow at the news. He thought

all was certainly over; his little girl was surely gone. But Jesus comforted him, saying, Be not afraid—only believe. They hurried on. When they reached the house the friends and neighbors were there, weeping and wailing, as was the custom, and making every show of sorrow because the little girl had died."

"I don't wonder," said Carrie, wiping her own eyes. "And her father was away when she breathed her last; that was too bad!"

"Jesus tried to quiet the people by saying the child was not dead. But they knew she was dead; so they ridiculed Jesus and probably thought Him crazy. But He sent them all out of the house; then He took the sad father and mother and the disciples who were with Him and went in where the little girl lay so still and white in death. How long He looked at her I do not know; He was never in a hurry. He and the others looked and looked, and sobbed, I doubt not. Then Jesus took hold of the little, thin, dead hand and held it for a moment; then He said to the little girl, *Talitha-cumi*."

"What did He say?" asked Charley.

"*Talitha-cumi*."

"And what is that?" inquired Mary; for Carrie was too busy with her own tearful blue eyes to ask questions.

"Mark's gospel says it means, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise; but the first word is brimful of tender love, as if Jesus had said, Dear little girl, I say unto thee, arise."

"And did she arise?" sobbed Carrie.

"Mark says, Straightway she arose and walked. Then He told them to give her food, and He went on His way."

"She wanted Him to stay at her house, I'm sure. Why didn't He?"

"No doubt she did, Carrie; but Jesus had other duties—so on He went to do good elsewhere."

"How old was she, Grandpa?"

"Too old for you, Charley. She was twelve."

"Just my age," said Carrie, brightly.



"DEAR CHILD, ARISE."

Mrs. Reed here proposed to read a poem on the raising of this little girl. All assenting, she read these words :

- “ The boat that bore the Master had crossed the silver sea,
And all along the mountain paths of rugged Galilee
Were sounds of voices eager-pitched, was throng of hurrying feet—
For then, as now, were weary hearts, and Jesus' words were sweet.
- “ With passion-freighted earnestness, intense and clear as flame,
Through tumult cleaving swift its way one prayer of pleading came:
My little daughter lieth sick, she lieth near to death ;
Oh ! on her lay Thy gentle hands, restore her fainting breath ’
- “ The stately ruler bowed his head before the Nazarene,
And meekly led the way for Him the surging ranks between ;
But ere they reached the stricken house was message brought of woe.
Thy daughter even now is dead, vex not the Master so.
- “ Dark grew the father's face with grief, with tears his eyes were dim ;
Who did not know this darling child was all the world to him ?
How could they call her dead ? the dear, the beautiful, the bright—
For him the summer lost its bloom, the noonday lost its light.
- “ Then tenderly unto his thought, as if to soothe its ache,
Be not afraid ; still keep thy faith, with power the Master spake,
Though long and keen the mourners' wail was borne upon the air
The bitter cry of agony, the voicing of despair.
- “ The Master hushed the clamor by the peace upon His face,
As up the stair He softly passed, and stood within the place
Where, wan and pale, the maiden lay, a lily frozen there,
And round her whiteness, like a cloud, the darkness of her hair.
- “ So still the little feet that late had danced to meet her sire !
So still the slender hands that swept but now the golden lyre !
In this deep slumber can she hear the thrilling word, Arise ?
Oh ! will she at that kingly look unclothe those sealed eyes ?
- “ She hears, she stirs, she lives once more. What joys for some there be
When to their hour of gloom the Lord has crossed the silver sea !
And though to us He give not back our dead, yet, better far,
We know that where He dwells to-day in life our dear ones are.”

CALLED BACK FROM THE GRAVE;

OR, VICTORIES OVER DEATH.

THE family had no sooner assembled in the sitting-room than Carrie declared, "I have scarce thought of anything all day, Grandpa, but of that little girl whom Jesus raised from the dead; and of the kind words He spoke—Dear little girl, I say unto thee, arise! That was just too lovely for anything."

"Didn't He raise lots of other folks?" asked Charley.

"Not very many," answered Grandpa; "but His greatest work of raising the dead is yet to come, and we will all be there."

"You mean the resurrection at the last day, Grandpa, don't you?" asked Mary.

"Yes, darling. At that time, as Jesus puts it, The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. But Jesus did call back from the dead several persons in addition to the little girl. One of these was a young man whose home was at Nain, a small city not very far from Nazareth."

"What was the young man's name?" asked Charley.

"We do not know. His mother was a widow and he was her only son. As Jesus came near the gate of the little city He met the funeral coming out; not with hearse and carriages, as at our funerals, but with loving friends carrying the dead body and others following after, with the mother, to the place of burial. When Jesus met them His great, loving heart was filled with compassion for the poor mother. He spoke to her very tenderly and said, Weep not."

"Why, how could she help weeping when her son was dead?" asked Carrie.

"She could not, except as her confidence in Jesus may have assured her that her son should be raised. Jesus then stepped forward and touched the coffin, and they who carried it stood still. Then He spoke to the dead young man, saying: Young man, I say unto thee, arise! There was a momentary rustling of the grave-

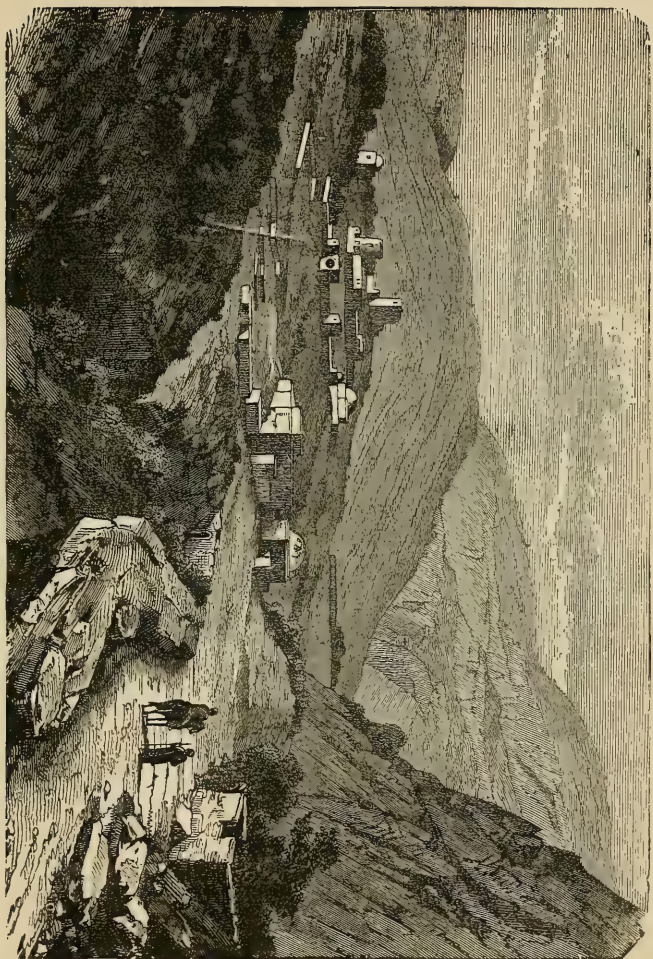


"And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak."—Luke vii, 14, 15.

clothes; a motion beneath them; and the young man sat up in the open coffin and began to speak. Then Jesus left him in his mother's arms and went His way."

"What a stir that must have made!" exclaimed Mary.

VIEW OF BETHANY AS IT NOW APPEARS



"It did. Some who saw it were filled with fear. Others said that God had sent a great prophet into the world; and so the news of what had been done went all through that country."

"Well," said Carrie, "I don't know which was the greater, this or the case you told us of last night."

"I can tell you of another which I think greatest of all," continued Grandpa.

"Oh! do, please," was the unanimous demand of the children, Carrie adding, "We want to hear about everybody you know."

"There was a man named Lazarus—"

"I know about him," shouted Charley, "he kept a lot of dogs, and was covered with sores, and—"

"Hold on, Charley, hold on," cried his mother. "You interrupt Grandpa very rudely, and besides, Lazarus did not keep dogs; and further, the Lazarus Grandpa spoke of was not Lazarus the beggar, who is your hero, but quite another man."

"Beg pardon," said Charley, very humbly. "There are so few Bible people I'm acquainted with that I was glad to come across a chap I thought I knew."

"Well," resumed Grandpa, "*my* Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha, and they were all very dear friends of Jesus, who often lodged at their house."

"Where was their house?" asked the boy.

"At Bethany, a pretty little village among the hills, some two miles east of Jerusalem. A small ruin is now shown at this place as the house where Lazarus lived and Jesus lodged so long ago. Once, when Jesus was far away, Lazarus became very sick. They sent at once, but before He reached Bethany, Lazarus had died and had been buried four days. His sisters were in the deepest distress. They felt sure that had Jesus reached there sooner, Lazarus would not have died. He came, however, and after some talk with them Jesus started to the grave, the sisters and a great company following. The grave was a vault hewn in a rock, and a great stone lay

upon the opening. In the rocks along the roadside such graves are common there to-day, and one is pointed out as that of Lazarus. They reached the place and stood about it weeping. Jesus wept, as the shortest verse in the Bible tells us in this very account of Lazarus."



"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid . . . And he that was dead came forth."—John xi, 41, 44.

"I know that verse, Grandpa; it is John xi, 35."

"Yes, Carrie, and that chapter tells all about the raising of Lazarus. When they had stood and wept awhile, Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha did not favor that, however. Her brother

had been dead so long that his body would not be fit to see. Its odor, too, would by this time be sickening. But they did as Jesus commanded. Inside the tomb could be seen the dead body wrapped in grave-clothes. Pouring out from the open door came the disgusting smell of putrefaction. But Jesus prayed, and then called with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! It was broad daylight; everybody could see clearly; and lo! the dead man, bound as he was in the grave-clothes, rose up and came out of the tomb."

"Ugh!" shuddered Carrie, "I could not have stood that."

"Loose him and let him go, said Jesus. They did loose him, and he did go back home with his now happy sisters. This made Jesus so popular that the leaders of the Jews decided to kill Him, and to escape their fury Jesus left Jerusalem and dwelt in an obscure place near the Jordan."

"Why, I am amazed!" exclaimed Mary. "Why should they want to kill Him for such an act?"

"Simply because they were envious of His popularity. Everybody loved Him so much they were afraid they would lose their hold on the people."

"Such men would soon lose their hold on me. I want nothing to do with such folks," said Carrie.

"Me, too," shouted Charley. "I wish more people did as Jesus used to. He made everybody happy!"

THE ROYAL SHEPHERD: OR, LOVE FOR THE LOWLY.

MARY was very anxious for the early assembling of the family, for she had a question which evidently was important to her and she wanted to ask it.

When they were fairly ready for work, she said: "I don't know why Jesus should have been so much concerned for the lame and blind and all other suffering people. It seems to me He would have enjoyed well people and happy people a great deal more."

"I am not surprised that you think so," responded Grandpa; "for His love to men and His kind work for the lowly are really amazing. *Why* He felt and acted so we may not be able to explain. His love is always spoken of as above any other love—even as beyond that of a mother."

"Nobody can tell how much a mother would do for a child—can they?" asked Carrie.

"No; and nobody can tell what God would do, or what His Son Jesus would do. There was one way in which Jesus often spoke of Himself and His work that helps very much to make it plain."

"Tell us about that, please. I want to understand it better," said Mary.

"In Palestine," began Grandpa, "the raising of sheep is very extensively followed. Almost every man keeps some sheep, and many men have immense flocks, thousands of sheep sometimes belonging to one person. Many men follow the care of sheep as a trade; they are known as shepherds, and most of their time is spent with their flocks."

"That's a jolly trade!" exclaimed Charley. "It must be real fun to be a shepherd."

"What makes you think so?" asked Grandpa.

"Oh! I've seen pictures of 'em sitting around on the grass, playing music on flutes and other things and having a good time, the sheep scampering around and everything so nice."

"Ah, Charley! that's the shepherd of the picture-books. The real shepherd has to go away from home, spend days and nights out-of-doors, hunt up pasture and water for the flocks as one place or another may fail, defend them from thieves or beasts of prey—do all, in short, that the care of an immense flock may require—and this is no easy work."

"That part I'd not do; I'd let my hired man do that," replied the boy, with a twinkle in his eye.

"When the sheep are in the fold, near the owner's home, then he may have a good time. Sheep soon get to know and trust those who feed and take care of them; they come at his call, they follow him, they answer to the names he gives them, they cluster about him lovingly, and, except at his command, they will not leave him. This is the kind of shepherd Charley wants to be—isn't it?"

"That's the kind, Grandpa; lots of fun and no hard work."

"But that, dear boy, is not the kind of shepherd Jesus is. We are His sheep; He loves us; He calls us. But do we follow Him? Not always, not very closely. But He does not become impatient; oh, no! He feeds and leads us, He loves and protects us. He calls Himself the Good Shepherd, and says, The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."

"That was true of Him," said Mary. "He did give His life for the sheep—didn't He?"

"Yes," answered Grandpa; "and He gave much more. He lived for men and worked for men, as well as died for them. In one parable He represents a sheep as having gone astray and Himself as the Shepherd going to seek it. And He seeks until He finds it. No



THE FOND SHEEP-KEEPER.

matter how long the journey, how rough the way, how steep the mountains, or how deep the valleys, He pushes on until the sheep is found; then He lays it on His shoulders, rejoicing, and carries it home in safety."

"I'm not sur^e I know what Jesus meant to teach by that," said Carrie, thoughtfully.

"Why, darling, it shows how He has sought and labored and suffered for poor, lost men—just as we have seen Him doing. Such is His concern that He would do all this for even one wanderer. And when even one such is found and is brought back to serve Him, He is glad. He is willing to toil, to suffer, to endure any burden for the sake of the lowly ones He calls His sheep."

"You remember the hymn," said Mrs. Reed, "which tells of the ninety and nine which were safe in the fold while one had gone astray. For this lost sheep the Shepherd went so far and worked so hard, you remember."

"Oh! yes, mamma!" shouted the girls; "and won't you sing it for us?"

"With pleasure," responded Mrs. Reed, stepping to the organ, where she sang those beautiful words:

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold.
Away on the mountain they heard it cry—
Sick and helpless and ready to die."

When Mrs. Reed ceased singing, Grandpa repeated from Psalm *xxiii* these words:

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters; He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."



SCATTERING SEED;

OR, EVIL AMONG THE GOOD.

"THOSE talks of Jesus about shepherds and sheep must have been very interesting to the people who knew so much about them," said Mary.

"Yes," answered Grandpa, "interesting and useful too. Jesus always tried to make His lessons useful as well as attractive. He took hold on what was familiar to the people, and used that to make truth plainer. Many who heard Him were farmers. They knew all about sowing seed as it was then done. To teach them Jesus once represented Himself as a farmer sowing seed. His words were the seed; He Himself scattered, or sowed it, as He taught."

"That was His parable of the Sower, wasn't it?" asked Mary. "That was our Sunday-school lesson one day."

"Yes," answered Grandpa. "In Matthew xiii Jesus tells of a sower who went out to sow. As he sowed, some seed fell on the path, or road, where the soil was trampled hard and the seed could not sink into it, but lay exposed on its surface, to be trodden under foot, or to be carried off by birds. This, He said, was like people who listen to the truth, but are careless about it. Then Satan, like a bird which follows the sower, catches away the seed, or some wicked thought or act crushes out the good thought, and it is lost."

"That's like a boy who don't attend to his lessons in school—he never gets up."

"That's it exactly, Charley," said Grandpa; "and one who does not attend to the Lord's lessons will never get up either. The Lord also said that some seed fell in stony places, where there was not



much soil. This sprouted up quickly and seemed very promising but no sooner did the hot summer sun shine on it than it was scorched and died. This, He said, was like people who hear the truth and seem to be delighted with it, but who don't hold out. They soon grow weary of doing well, and give it up."

"That's like lots of girls in our school," said Carrie. "They get promoted or begin a new study, and they work as if they would stand No. 1 forever, but in a few weeks they fall off and are at the tail of the class."

"A new broom sweeps clean," added Mrs. Reed, the children readily catching the point of the old proverb.

"The true way," said Grandpa, "is to begin sweeping clean and to keep on doing so. The stony-ground hearers began, but did not keep on. Many such persons are in the world. Other seed, Jesus said, fell among thorns, and by and by, as both thorns and wheat grew, the thorns became rank and choked out the wheat. This is like people who attempt to be good and bad at the same time. They do some good, but they allow some evil. This won't succeed. The bad will grow faster and ranker, and will surely choke out the good."

"That's what ails the man who lives back of our store," said Mary. "He joined a temperance society and he joined church, but he kept on drinking just a little, as he said, and now he's a real drunkard, worse than he was before."

"You have hit a good illustration. If Henry had gone wholly into temperance or the church work, he would have done well; but he went into the bar-room also. His was a case of good seed among thorns, and the good seed was choked out."

"But, Grandpa, did none of the seed come to a good end?" asked Carrie, with a tone of disappointment. "It seems as if bad gets the best of it every time."

"After telling of the three kinds of people we have talked of, Jesus says, Some fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit, some forty

fold, some sixty fold, some a hundred fold. There is always a great deal opposing the good. Much good work and many good words come to nought, but some good results will always follow faithful work. Some seed will spring up and bear fruit. Depend upon it,

“Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, and moist and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garner in the sky.”

“But, Grandpa, isn't there such a thing as sowing bad seed?” asked Mary.

“Alas! yes, and a plenty of it too. Jesus explained this in the parable of the tares.”

“Tares! and what are tares?” asked Carrie. “About tearing my dresses I know more than I want to, but those are not the tares you mean.”

“No, I mean t-a-r-e-s, a bad weed which grows very fast. When it first sprouts, it looks very much like wheat. Its grain also looks like wheat, but it is very unwholesome. In the parable of the tares Jesus tells of a man who sowed good seed in his field. But he had a mean enemy, who, watching his chance, stole out one night and sowed tares everywhere through the sprouting wheat. Nobody suspected any wrong until the tares began to grow rank and tall above the wheat. Then everybody was surprised to see so much bad. But the owner knew how it was. He understood it all, and said, An enemy hath done this.”

“And is that the way Jesus accounts for the bad that is in the world?”

“For much of it, Mary. The enemies who do this evil work are Satan and his friends. He goes slily, as if by night, and in the good soil of children's hearts and minds, and in those of older people, too, he scatters all manner of vile seed. Parents and teachers little suspect what has been done until they are surprised by seeing a rank

growth of evil. Satan has been there, or some of his helpers. The enemy of all good has done it."

"But can't Jesus stop this mean work?" asked Carrie. "He surely is able to do so."

"He commands us to watch against it, and to give Satan no chance to do his mischief. He promises His help while we watch and fight this enemy, and He has assured us that by and by Satan and his helpers shall be overthrown and all their work shall be rooted out."

"But why don't Jesus root it out now and be done with it?" asked Mary.

"The servants of the man whose field was sown with tares asked the same question. They wanted to go right out and root up every tare, but the master said, No, lest they should root up the wheat also. So in this world the Lord sees some benefits from allowing evil and good to remain for the time side by side. But the harvest time came. The tares were gathered and burned and the wheat was saved. So shall it be in the end of the world. The evil shall be destroyed, the good shall be preserved."

"Well, I don't want to be any tare," said Charley, in an emphatic tone. "I'm for the wheat every time."

As Charley's words ended, his mother very gently began to sing the words:

"Sowing the seed by the daylight fair,
Sowing the seed by the noon-day glare,
Sowing the seed by the fading light,
Sowing the seed in the solemn night;
Oh! what shall the harvest be?
Oh! what shall the harvest be?"

The children quietly gathered about her, joining in the chorus, and so the entire hymn was sung.



DOING MISCHIEF.

WONDERS OF YEAST; OR, THE POWER OF INFLUENCE.

"GRANDPA, there's an old saying, Give the devil his due," said Mary. "It's not very pretty to use, but I don't mean it in any wicked way. But is it fair to charge the devil, or Satan, with all the wrong done in the world?"

"By no means, my dear. If he were responsible for it all, why should any of us be condemned for our misdeeds? The fact is, we are influenced by other persons, and we influence ourselves, too, for good or for evil by the thoughts we allow and by the surroundings we choose."

"But how can we help having evil thoughts and feelings or meeting with bad company sometimes?" asked Carrie. "If I could always be at home I could do well enough, so far as company is concerned; but at school, in the street, almost everywhere, there are bad people and I cannot keep clear of them."

"An old writer says, We cannot prevent evil birds from flying over our heads, but we can keep them from building nests in our hair."

"Oh! I see, Grandpa," laughed Carrie. "Evil thoughts and companions will come and I can't help that, but I can refuse to entertain them. That's what I try to do, and I mean to all the more, since I understand it better. They may fly over my head, but they shall not make nests in my hair."

"Nor mine," said Charley, rubbing his own short crop. "They wouldn't do much in my stubble-field. Carrie's curls would be a heap better for them."

"This same idea Jesus urged when He said to His disciples, Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Temptation is abundant and everybody will feel its power. Jesus Himself was tempted; it is said He was tempted in all points like as we are. To be tempted is not wrong. He was sinless, though He was tempted. To *enter into* temptation is the wrong. We must watch and pray against that."

"Oh! I see," responded Carrie. "Entering in is letting the birds build nests—isn't it?"

"Yes; and that is the sin which we must carefully avoid. Resist temptation; do not yield."

"That's clear to me now," said Mary. "I see just where I must take my stand."

"The Lord taught a lesson on this subject in a very pretty way," continued Grandpa. "He took hold on a simple thing that everybody understood—that is, the leavening or raising of bread, as it was then done in every house."

"What! setting bread to get light? Did Jesus talk about such every-day things as that?"

"Yes, Mary. In the parable of the Leaven He said: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened."

"Didn't He explain any more what He meant?—I don't just see His meaning," asked Carrie.

"No; and for that reason good men have had different ideas as to just what He did mean. But see how the case stood. Women then had little mills with which they ground the meal as they needed it. They would spread a clean cloth on the floor; place their mill-stones on it; put in the grain; turn the stones by hand; gather up the meal which worked out at the edges of the stones; put it into a pot or dish to mix it; add their leaven or yeast; let it raise enough, and then bake it."

"Why, that's the way we do, only we don't grind our own meal," said Mary.

"They did it then as many people now grind their own coffee. The mill-stones were two round, flat stones laid one upon the other. The top stone had a hole at the middle into which the grain was poured; it also had an upright handle by which it was turned. The grain was ground fine between the stones and the meal worked out at the edges, ready for use after it had been put through a fine sieve."

"I'm glad we don't have such trouble nowadays," said Mary. "But when meal is mixed and yeast or leaven is put into it, the whole of the dough gets light. What did Jesus mean by saying the kingdom of heaven was like that?"

"He meant that good influences or bad influences were like yeast. They would affect any boy or girl, man or woman, into whom they entered. The whole lump—be it a child, a man, or a nation—feels the power of good or of evil as a lump of dough feels the yeast."

"Oh! I see!" exclaimed Carrie. "And that's another way that evil comes into the world—isn't it? One bad man influences another."

"Yes; as Solomon says, One sinner destroyeth much good. On the other hand, one righteous person does much good. We are all like yeast; we influence those about us for good or for evil; we raise them or sink them."

"And they who are about us influence us also," added Mrs. Reed.

"And our own thoughts influence us, too," added Mary.

"Dear me! we are all a set of yeast-cakes—aren't we?" said Charley, with his shrug of the shoulders and his thrust of his hands into the pockets of his trousers.

"I read," said Mary, "of a young lady whose father refused her permission to go to a public ball. She urged that it would not hurt her. Hé picked up a dead coal from the fire and told her to take it, saying, It won't hurt you. No, said she, but it will spoil my hands. So, said he, if not hurt by the ball you may still be soiled."

"A good illustration of the power of influence," said Grandpa.



THE WONDERS OF YEAST.

VINES AND FRUIT TREES; OR, SHALL WE CUT IT DOWN?

"I DON'T wonder everybody wanted to hear Jesus preach and teach," said Carrie. "He made sermons from sheepfolds, from the fields, and the seeds, and everybody could understand what He meant."

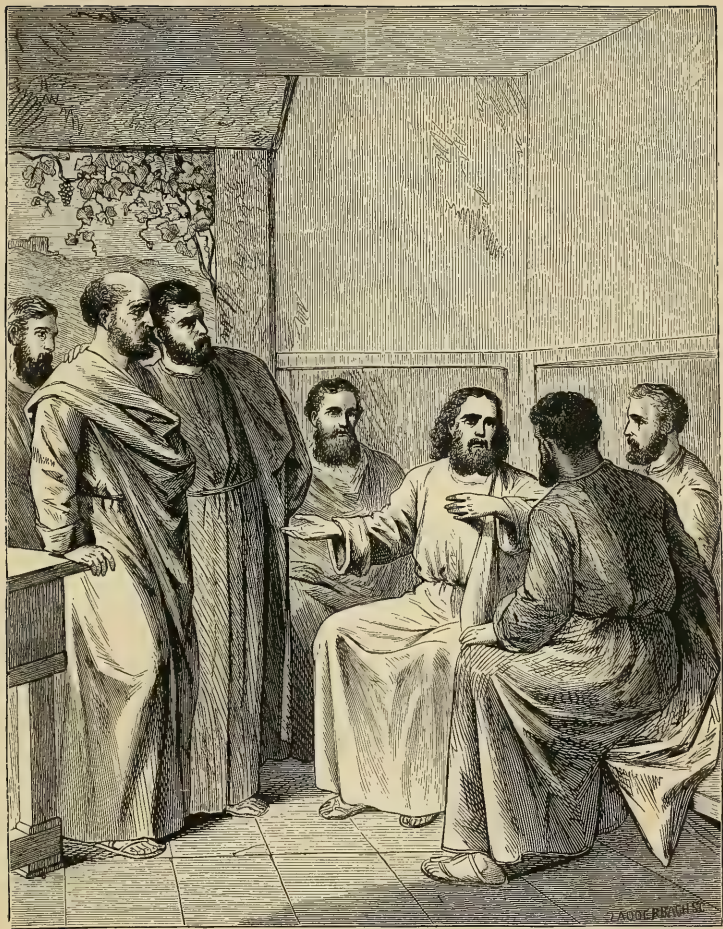
"He did make everything very clear," answered Grandpa, "and that is why it is said, The common people heard Him gladly. They were not educated, and could not understand most of their teachers; but Jesus they could understand, He made everything plain, so they loved to hear Him."

"Tell us about some other talks of His," added Charley. "I feel like the common people did—I'm glad to hear Him."

"One day Jesus and His disciples were together, and He began to talk about vines. Why He spoke of vines we do not know, but probably over the door of the room where they sat there were vines. As they entered they may have noticed the fruit or the branches, and so had this subject in mind. He began by saying, I am the vine, my Father is the husbandman or vine-dresser, ye are the branches. So He caught every man's attention. All who were present and heard Him began wondering why they were called branches, and why He called Himself a vine."

"And why did He do it, Grandpa? That was a queer way to begin. I want to know what He meant," exclaimed Mary.

"So the disciples did, and they listened, as you will. His first lesson from the vine was that His followers, if really true disciples, would be to Him as branches are to a vine. He would support



LESSONS FROM THE VINE.

and nourish them and they would bear fruit—yes, good fruit, and plenty of it.”

“What do you mean by their bearing fruit?” asked Carrie. “I’m not sure I understand.”

“It is the nature of a grape-vine to produce grapes, so it is the nature of true disciples to produce good deeds. Good deeds are the true fruit of Christ, the vine, and of Christians, the branches; as grapes are the true fruit of grape-vines.”

“Thanks, Grandpa; I see now very plainly what you mean,” said Carrie.

“Not to do these good works is to prove that you are no real branch of Christ. Branches without fruit are dead branches. These God takes away, and Jesus says they wither and are burned. They may be people who talk about Christ and are members of the church, but unless they live as Jesus lived, they are not true branches.”

“But, Grandpa, how can one do these good things? It is not easy. I’m sure I try very hard, but I’m not half as good a girl as I want to be.”

“Ah, Carrie, the best things always cost most. It is not easy to get them. But Jesus said, He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.”

“What does abide in Him mean?” asked Charley.

“It means to be with Him, under His care, and in His ways all the time, so that you really abide or live with Jesus every moment,” answered Grandpa.

“As if you lived in the same house, ate at the same table, went to the same school and church, did the same things, and was with Him all the time.”

“That is it, Mary. If we live in that way, we will abide in Him and bear much fruit. This plentiful fruit-bearing pleases Jesus and honors God.”

“But suppose you don’t do it, then what, Grandpa?” asked Charley.



SHALL WE CUT IT DOWN?

"I'll tell you. In the thirteenth chapter of Luke Jesus tells of a man who raised vines and fruit. In his garden he planted a fig-tree, and took good care of it until the time came for it to bear fruit. He then went to it and looked for figs, but not a fig was to be seen. Another year he went again, but it brought no better result, and still another year, and yet no fruit. Then he called his head workman and said, These three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

"Served it right," exclaimed Charley. "It had a good chance, but it was good for nothing."

"Have not you, my boy, had a good chance too, and have you borne the fruit Jesus wanted? He gave you life, health, mind, knowledge, and many other good things, but has He found the fruit He wants?"

Charley was silent for a moment; then looking up with a bright smile, he said, "I haven't been just the boy I should have been, but I'll try again."

"The Lord is willing we should try again, for though the master said, Cut it down, yet when his man suggested another year of trial, he was willing to allow it; but if that year failed to bring the fruit, then the tree was to come down sure."

"And must I come down next year *sure*, if I'm not a better boy, Grandpa?"

"That is not for me to say, Charley; but this I can say: Be a true, frank, noble, God-fearing boy, and you will never come down; that is sure!"

"Well, that's worth trying for," answered he, frankly, "if for no other reason, to make me like you, Grandpa."

SEEKING IN EARNEST: OR, DETERMINED TO WIN.

“**C**ARRIE and I have been talking over that idea of abiding in Christ, and we are both going to try our best to do it.”

“That’s a good resolve, Mary. You will need courage and effort to come up to the mark, but earnest seekers find great encouragement in the Bible. Those who are determined to find are never disappointed.”

“Why, yes,” said Carrie, “a golden text I once learned says, Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

“In Matthew xiii, Jesus tells of two earnest seekers. One found a great treasure hid in a field. It may mean that what he found there was silver or gold in the rock, hidden there by nature, or it may mean other valuables, hidden there for safe-keeping by persons who afterward lost trace of the spot or died without telling of it; at any rate, this man found it. Probably he was too honest to steal the treasure, or he may have been unable to get it away in safety if he should steal it, so he decided to buy the field, treasure and all; then he would have it as his own. The price was high, but he was determined; so he sold all that he had, and, with the money thus secured, he bought the field.”

“Good for him!” exclaimed Charley. “He was clear grit, wasn’t he?”

“Yes, he was an earnest seeker, and what he sought he found. That is what the Lord meant to teach when He told of this man. He told of another man also who was an earnest seeker. He was



SEEKING FOR TREASURES.



BARGAINING FOR A SPLENDID JEWEL

a dealer in precious stones, and traveled everywhere seeking the finest gems, especially pearls. These grow in the shells of large oysters. In warm climates fishermen dive for them and seek them very carefully at the bottom of the sea. A large pearl will make a fortune for its finder. It is said—

“There are two moments in the diver’s life: .
One when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge;
Then when, a prince, he rises with his pearl.”

“Why, are pearls so valuable as that?” asked Mary. “I know they are much admired and very beautiful, but I did not know they cost much.”

“Why, yes. Small pearls are worth from fifty cents to three dollars each; single fine pearls cost from five dollars upward; pearl necklaces cost from five hundred dollars to fifteen thousand dollars. A single pearl, found in a South American river, sold in Paris in 1858 for two thousand dollars. A famous pearl, owned by Sir Thomas Gresham, of England, was valued at seventy-five thousand dollars; one, owned by the crown of Spain, was valued at one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; while history tells that Cleopatra, on a mere banter, destroyed her pearl ear-drops, which were valued at four hundred thousand dollars.”

“Heigh ho!” shouted Charley; “I think a diver that gets one of those pearls makes his fortune sure enough.”

“The man of whom Jesus was telling met a pearl-fisher, most likely a Malay, who had a pearl of great size and immense value. This pearl the man wanted. He offered what money he had by him, but it was not enough. He then sold all his other possessions, turned into money everything he owned, and handed it over for this one great pearl. You see how earnest he was.”

“Yes,” replied Carrie, “and earnest for that one pearl. No other suited him. He was bound to have that one. But why was he so persistent for that particular pearl?”

"He may have had an order from his King or from a rich customer for just such a pearl as this; or he may have felt sure that he could make more money from this than from any other. Many reasons can easily be given for his earnestness in getting this gem rather than any other."

"That's so," assented Carrie. "Now tell us of another seeker."

"Another earnest seeker is told about in Luke xv. She had lost a piece of money in her house, but she could not find it by any ordinary seeking. Her house was not well lighted. There were dark corners and crannies here and there; so she lit a lamp, took her broom, and swept carefully everywhere, till at last she found it. She meant business, she was determined to find that piece of money, and find it she did."

"Who are meant by these earnest seekers?" inquired Mary. "Do they mean Jesus or us, or who is meant?"

"They mean any earnest seeker. But who was ever more earnest than Jesus? You remember His reference to the shepherd who sought the sheep *until he found it*. That is always His way of working; He seeks hidden treasure, whatever it may be, until He finds it; He seeks rare pearls, whatever this may mean, until He finds them; He seeks lost coins, however this be understood, until they are secured. Had not He worked in this spirit He would never have done so much for us."

"Why, that's the idea in a hymn I heard good old Mrs. Brown singing when I was there yesterday. She sang:

'Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He to save my soul from danger
Interposed His Precious Blood.' "

"That's it, exactly," responded Grandpa. He was the model seeker of the world, and in all good efforts we will do well to imitate Him. Whenever you are pursuing a good object, remember

him who sought the hidden treasure, him who sought the pearl of great price, and her who sought the lost piece of money."

"Why, she reminds me of a story my teacher told," said Mary. "A man working in his barn lost some money. He knew he had it after he entered the barn and that it was lost before he left, so, said he, I will find that money if I move every straw. At the search he went in this spirit. In a little while he came out of the barn shouting to his wife that it was found. She then turned the matter back on him, saying, When you search for the way of eternal life as you have searched for that money, you will be just as sure to find it and just as glad when it is found."

"I knew a little girl," chimed in Carrie, who caught the story-telling fever, "who was very good at finding anything her mother wanted. When on a hunting errand she spurred herself every little while by saying, It must be somewhere; It must be somewhere."

"Very good," said Grandpa. "Earnest seekers are sure finders, as a rule. Each of you who means to seek a life more full of good fruits, remember the text Carrie quoted, Seek, and ye shall find."

"And remember my man in the barn," added Mary.

"And my little girl who hunted," added Carrie.

"And my example," added Charley, as he strutted from the room amid roars of laughter from all the party.



SEARCHING FOR THE LOST COIN.

A ROYAL WELCOME; OR, THE WANDERER HOME AGAIN.

"IT seems to me," said Mary, opening the conversation, as the happy home party met again, "that God can hardly welcome all who seek Him, even though they do it earnestly. Some wander so far and sin so terribly that it seems impossible for them to be forgiven."

"It does indeed seem impossible that all should receive forgiveness," answered Grandpa. "Some go so far astray and are so persistent in wrong that they seem to be beyond hope. And yet even such may be blessed, as is shown in the story of the Prodigal Son."

"Tell us about that, Grandpa, please," said Mary. "I know something about it, but I want to know more."

"Well, Jesus told of a man who had two sons. One day the younger asked his father to give him all the money and other treasures that would become his when the father should die."

"That was rather rough!" exclaimed Charley. "He wasn't willing to wait for his father to die, but wanted his share right off! I'd have sent him off with a flea in his ear if I'd been his father."

"He was just like most people," said Grandpa. "He thought he could do for himself and in his own way better than any one could do for him. God lets people try for themselves and do without Him if they can, and so this father did. He gave the young man his share of everything, and, without fear of the future, the young man gathered all together and off he went into a far country—there to be free from father and friends and to do for himself precisely as he might please."

"That was very silly!" exclaimed Carrie. "He had better stayed near home, so that he could have help in sickness or trouble."

"But that is just the way people do with God. He can advise and help in every trouble, but they get just as far from Him as they can instead of clinging close to Him."

"Why, Grandpa, I never thought of it in that way!—but it is so. That is the way people do with God."

"When this young man reached that distant country he did not regard his father's example of industry and saving, but he went into all sorts of foolishness, spending money with worthless people and in wicked ways, until every penny was spent. Then his associates dropped him. They were not true friends; they kept his company for no other purpose than to get his money or to help him spend it. When it was gone they cared no more for him and he began to be in want. Even then he did not want to go back to his father; he was not ready to confess his wrong and ask forgiveness, but he still tried to do for himself. He went and hired out to a man who raised hogs, and this man sent him into the fields to look after the pigs."

"What a horrid business!" exclaimed both the girls.

"Especially," said Grandpa, "for a rich young man; and one, too, who, being a Jew, had been taught to regard hogs as the vilest of beasts, with which no pure man could have anything to do. To make matters worse for him, there was famine in the land at that time; so the miserable youth became so hungry that he was glad to eat food that was meant for the pigs. And yet no man pitied him or gave him better victuals. In this deep sorrow he began to think of his own foolish actions; he was sure the very servants in his father's house were better off than he; they had bread—they had enough of it and to spare—while he was actually starving. At last, unable to stand it any longer, he decided to go back home and ask for a servant's place."

"That was humble," said Mary; "all the pride was out of him by that time—wasn't it, Grandpa?"



MOURNING FOR THE LOST ONE

"Yes; and well it might be. He had made a miserable failure: he had shown himself very foolish and quite incompetent to take care of himself. But he started for home, thinking over what he would say when he should meet his dear, good father. On he trudged—tired, faint, hungry, ragged, penitent. At home everybody was in sorrow; they had heard nothing from him and they mourned him as one lost or, possibly, dead. While they were grieving after this fashion he drew near. He was a pitiable looking lad, but when his father saw him he gave a royal welcome to the boy; he ran to meet him, threw his arms about him, kissed him, would not listen to his proposal to become a servant, checked his expressions of penitence, and assured him that he was heartily welcome to his home again."

"That was splendid!" exclaimed Carrie. "He had been so foolish and had done so badly! It was wonderful that his father received him at all."

"It was. But he received him grandly," replied Grandpa; "he put new clothes on him, new shoes, a new ring, ordered a good dinner, and everybody began to have a merry time. So Jesus taught about the welcome that awaits those who seek God."

"But, Grandpa, doesn't it encourage people to go on sinning if God will take them back so easily and serve them so well?"

"Turn, Mary, to Isaiah lv, 6, and read your own answer."

Mary turned and read: "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." To this Grandpa added a little illustration in these words:

"I once read of a very wicked man who in his last sickness said, One word in the Bible keeps me from peace. It is the word *while*. He pointed to that text and said, While He could be found I was not ready; now I am ready and He cannot be found. Do not trifle with God; there may be a time when wanderers cannot come home."

TOO LATE;
OR, REJECTED AT THE DOOR.

"**L**AST night we were dwelling on the fact that the Lord might not always be found," said Grandpa, as the evening party gathered about him. "It is a very solemn fact, and I trust you will not overlook it."

"No danger of my overlooking it," replied Carrie. "I have thought it over and over to-day. But is there really any great danger that anybody will seek the Lord in earnest and be too late for His blessing?"

"There certainly is great danger," answered Grandpa; "and that, too, though He is so kind. But I will tell you one of His own parables and you may judge for yourselves. In Matthew xxv is the story of ten young girls who went to attend the wedding of one of their friends."

"It is the parable of the Ten Virgins—is it not, Grandpa?"

"Yes, Mary; that is its usual title."

"What is a parable?" asked Charley.

"It is a story, not of something which actually did happen, but which is like something that actually does happen. So Jesus in this parable says the kingdom of heaven—that is, His own kingdom—is *like* to this case of ten virgins. He uses the well-known facts of a wedding festival in that day to make plain the less understood facts of His own kingdom."

"How did they manage weddings where Jesus lived?" asked Carrie.

"In various ways, just as with us to-day. The ceremonies Jesus

describes were very common. The bridegroom, attended by his young men friends, went to the house of the bride to claim her. The marriage was not by any ceremony and promises, as with us, but the act of taking the bride from her own home was the final step in the marriage. Having received his bride, the procession started for his new home. This took place usually about midnight, torches being borne by attendants and musicians leading the company. At some convenient point on the way the young lady friends of the parties came out to meet the procession, all of them dressed in white and carrying torches or lamps. Then the party marched on joyously to the new home, where festivity and feasting continued all night, and in some cases for many days, as the parties might please, and were able to pay."

"Oh! now I see," said Mary, "what many things in that parable mean. The virgins were these young girl friends waiting on the way at somebody's house, expecting to join the procession when it came and go with that happy party to the bride's new home and have a good time."

"Exactly," added Grandpa; "and that they should sleep or doze while waiting for the procession was not strange. When the procession drew near, those watching for it would call out, as the parable says, Behold, the bridegroom cometh!—go ye out to meet him. Then there would be hurried preparation; lighting the lamps, adjusting the dresses, and getting into order. You see how natural all this would be."

"And it was at that last moment," said Mary, "that five of the virgins found their lamps would not burn."

"I never could see," added Carrie, "why the other girls did not spare them a little oil. It was mean to refuse them and send them at that hour to wake up some shop-keeper, if indeed they could find one, and buy for themselves."

"But remember, Carrie," replied Grandpa, "Jesus meant to teach that preparation for entrance into His kingdom was not a thing that

one person could give another; each must get it for himself. And then the giving of the oil was not so easy either. Those girls did not go around with quart cans in their hands, as when people now go to the store for kerosene. The lamp was a small, shoe-shaped vessel, the point or toe-end being open for the wick to project. The entire body of the shoe was filled with wick. On this wick small quantities of oil were poured. This would be drawn by attraction to the flame at the toe-end and keep it bright. A neat little bottle of oil was carried by each girl, from which a fresh supply was poured into the lamp as the flame grew dim."

"Now I see," said Mary, "how it was that the oil did not slop over and spill on their dresses. The wick was like a sponge filled with oil, and as it grew dry more oil was poured on, but never enough to slop over."

"You have it exactly, Mary. The five foolish virgins had not filled their little oil-bottles and so could not wet the wick and light up for the procession. If they had borrowed and lighted up for the moment, they would soon have needed more; so it was not so mean, after all, that they were refused by the others—was it, Carrie?"

"No; but I'm sorry for them all the same."

"These foolish virgins were not ready when the procession came. That was their one chance and they missed it. They hurried off and bought some oil; but the wedding party had passed by. They hurried after it through the dark streets, but it had entered the house; the door was shut and the festivities had begun. They knock, they call; but the master of the house does not know them; he comes to the wicket in his gateway, but he does not know that these are part of the proper company, and so does not admit them. All the prepared guests were already there; so he sends these poor belated girls away."

"That was too bad!" said Carrie, very sadly; "but I discovered yesterday that railroad trains don't wait for late people, and I don't see why the Lord should do so either."



TOO LATE; OR, THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.

"He does wait patiently for all; but He will permit no one to trifle with His grace," answered Grandpa. "There comes a time when the door will be shut—when entrance to the feast spread by His love will be refused. I think your mother can sing us a sacred song which represents the interview of those disappointed girls with the gate-keeper."

"Willingly," answered Mrs. Reed, who then sang:

"Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill;
Late, late, so late!—but we can enter still;
No light had we; for that we do repent,
And, learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.

"Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light—so late! and dark and chill the night;
Oh! let us in, that we may find the light;
Oh! let us in, that we may find the light.

"Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now;
No, no!—too late!—ye cannot enter now.

"Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?—
Oh! let us in, that we may kiss His feet;
Oh! let us in, oh! let us in,
Oh! let us in, though late, to kiss His feet.

"Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now."

As the singing ceased not a word was said for some moments, when Grandpa closed the evening's chat by saying: "Let us all be ready in good time."

GENEROSITY ABUSED;

OR, FORGIVENESS FOR THE FORGIVING.

"I CAN'T help thinking," began Carrie, with some eagerness, "that those girls of whom we talked last night were not just as kind to each other as they might have been. It seems very much as though they looked out for No. 1, caring not what came of the hindmost."

"The point at which their refusal to help came," said Grandpa, "was not the point where kindness could avail; it was too late then. But we do not know what had taken place earlier. Perhaps the wise virgins had been urging the others to get ready in time. Certainly wise followers of Jesus urge other persons so to do. Kindness to one another is one of the lessons Jesus urged most strongly. Do you remember the parable of the Unmerciful Servant?"

None of the children were sure about it, but all urged Grandpa to tell them the story—so he began:

"There once was a great and rich King who called all the people who did business for him to come and render account for all they had been doing. One after another reported, and at last came one who was fearfully in his debt. He owed the King ten thousand talents, a sum so great that he could never hope to pay it. It is as if he owed millions and millions of dollars."

"What did he owe so much for?" asked Charley, anxious to get at the bottom facts of the business.

"I don't know," said Grandpa, frankly. "Probably no person ever did owe so much. This is a parable, you know—a story not true in itself, but like something that is true."

"Well, what is it like then? Who is like a man that owes so much money?" pressed the boy.

"You are, Charley, and I am. We owe the Lord, our great King, far more than we can ever pay. He gives us everything, and what do we give Him? Nothing worth naming."

"That's so," exclaimed Charley; "but how did the man fix it with the King?"

"He had nothing to pay; so the King commanded that the man, his wife, and his children, all should be sold as slaves, and that their goods also be sold to pay the debt as far as possible."

"That was awful!" exclaimed Carrie.

"So the man thought; for while the officer held him he fell down on his knees before the King, begging him to have patience, and promising to pay him all. And then what, think you, the King did? He pitied the man, ordered them to let him go, and actually forgave all the debt."

"That was splendid, wasn't it? I love that King for being so kind," said Carrie.

"That King, you know, means Christ. That is the way He forgives us when we come in our poverty and sorrow to Him."

"That is just like Him. He always is so good," continued Carrie. "He is kind even if those girls were not so good as they might have been to their companions."

"Yes, and He means that those whom He forgives shall be kind also, for notice how He goes on with His parable in Matthew xviii. This man, who had been forgiven so much, went out, and finding a man who owed him a hundred pence, a mere trifle, he demanded that it be paid on the spot. This man also fell on his knees and begged for time, promising to pay every penny; but the hard-hearted creditor had him arrested and thrown into prison. At this the people were very sorry, so they went and told the King."

"I'll bet he was mad," exclaimed Charley.

"You are right," answered Grandpa, "though I should say *indig-*



THE FORGIVING KING.

nant rather than *mad*. He sent for the man, and having shown him how cruelly he had acted and how unlike his King he had been, he sent him to prison and to punishment until all that great debt he owed should be paid."

"But," exclaimed Carrie, "I understood you to say the debt was so big it could never be paid."

"So it was, and the sending to prison till it should be paid meant imprisonment for life. That was what it amounted to. He never could pay so much, especially when he was kept in prison."

"Sorry for him and his family," said Carrie, with her usual flow of sympathy.

"Served him right," exclaimed Charley, very decidedly.

"Before we pass sentence on him, however," said Grandpa, "let Mary read the last verse of Matthew xviii. We may find that the shoe pinches us a little too."

Mary turned to the verse designated and read: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

"That's for Carrie and Mary," said Charley, with an attempt to look serious. "It shows them how to treat their brother, don't it, Grandpa?"

"Yes, Charley, and it is for you also. It shows you how to treat your sisters and all the people of the world, for they are brothers in the sense Jesus means."

"That's a close pinch," answered the boy. "I guess it won't do to hold grudges or stay mad with anybody, will it, Grandpa? Better forgive and forget."

"No, my boy. If others injure you, leave them in God's hands; He will repay. Let us forgive and love one another, even as we wish the Lord to forgive us."

WORK AND WAGES; OR, SETTLING WITH THE SERVANTS.

"AFTER a day's thought on the talk of last evening," began Grandpa, "what do you think of the Lord's way of treating those who are indebted to Him?"

"Why," responded Carrie, "I think He's just too good for anything. He is ever so kind and nice."

"So do I," said Mary, and Charley added, "Me too."

"But how about His sending that man to prison until the debt was paid, when there was no possible chance that he ever could pay it?"

"He wasn't fit to be pardoned. He wouldn't forgive a little mite of a debt, though he had been forgiven so liberally," said Mary, the other children assenting to her view of the case.

"In all His dealings with men," resumed Grandpa, "the Lord leans toward kindness and love. David said, Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. John said, God is love. Lovingly and gladly He always does far better than we have any reason to expect. There is a parable of the laborers in the vineyard which is rather odd. It shows how the Lord is both just and generous. Would you like to hear about it as the topic of our evening's talk?"

"Yes, yes, yes," came in from all sides of the merry group; so Grandpa began:

"There was once a rich man who owned a great vineyard. One day he needed some extra help. Possibly the vines needed pruning or tying up, or the ground may have needed loosening, or possibly

the grapes were just ready to be gathered. At any rate, he needed more help than he regularly had, so he went out to the market-place where men wanting work used to stand, and bargained with a lot of men to go to work. It was early in the morning, and they were each to get a penny for a full day's work."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Charley. "One penny a day for a man! Ha, ha! big pay! He'd get rich soon on that! Why, I wouldn't pull weeds or pick strawberries for any such pay as that, *I* wouldn't. A dime a day and found is my lowest."

"But how much is a penny?" asked Grandpa, when the boy had quieted down and the others had composed themselves after his outburst.

"A penny! Why, one cent, to be sure! Ha, ha!" answered the boy, with a jolly laugh.

"No, Charley; an English penny is nearer two cents than one. But the *denarius*, which was the coin to be paid these men for the day's work, was about fifteen cents, more, even, than your exorbitant price. Then, too, prices at that time were not the same as now. Two pence was enough for the good Samaritan to pay a hotel-keeper for the care of the wounded man whom he left with him. So a penny, or a denarius, was not mean pay for a day's work. It would board a man at a hotel for a day or two. These laborers agreed to work for that price, and thought themselves lucky to get so good a job. The work went on, but the need for it was urgent; so about nine o'clock the owner went out for more help. He found another squad of men, and, promising to pay them what was right, set them, too, at work. At noon he went out again and hired others, and so at three o'clock. Quitting-time was coming on, and the work needed was not finished, so at five o'clock still other men were hired and went to work for one hour only. At last the bell rang. The shadow on the sun-dial showed that it was six o'clock. The men quit and came to the owner of the vineyard for their pay; and what, suppose you, each received?"

"He agreed to give the first lot a penny," answered Charley; "of course he stuck to that bargain."

"Of course; but what, do you suppose, the others received?" answered Grandpa.

"In proportion, I suppose," answered Mary, Carrie adding, "To be sure; that would be fair."

"In settling with the men the one-hour workers came first, and every man was paid a denarius. Then came the three-hour men, and each received the same pay; then the six-hour men, and after them the nine-hour men, and for every one of them there was a denarius."

"They had a snap, as we boys say, especially the fellows that worked just an hour."

"Yes; they went off, no doubt, chuckling over their unusual pay, and saying all manner of good things about their generous employer. Probably the next party was not quite so well pleased. They had worked longer, but were paid the same. So each party would come and go in its turn, each dissatisfied with its wages a little more than the one before it. At last came the all-day men, and they received every man a penny. Then there was a scene. They grumbled; they spoke out their complaint; and what, think you, they complained of?"

"Why," answered Mary, promptly, "that they who had done so much more work got no more money."

"But they got what they bargained for," replied Carrie. "That was their price."

"If the old man—I mean the boss, the what-do-you-call-him who hired them—if he paid all he said he would they had no business to howl," declared Charley, very earnestly taking up the cause of the owner.

"You have it," said Grandpa, "though not in the choicest terms. He stuck to his bargain; kept his word; fulfilled his promise; was strictly honest with those men."

"Yes," answered Mary, "but those other men received the same pay for less work."

"That's because the old gentleman felt good. He was generous; that's what ailed him," answered Charley, seeming to get readily at the business side of the case.

"That is the point," continued Grandpa. "He was just to the all-day men, he was generous to the others."

"Why wasn't he generous to the all-day men at the same time?" insisted Mary.

"He was, I doubt not, in the price paid—say enough to keep a sick man at a hotel for two days. He was just to all, was generous to all. But one thing he did that makes the case seem strange—he did as he pleased with his own money."

"If he had done as *I* please," answered Mary, "I would feel better about it, I suppose."

"Now, my dears," said Grandpa, "in leaving this parable what shall we remember as its lessons for us?"

"That the Lord wants us to work for Him all day, if possible; one hour, if better cannot be done," said Mrs. Reed. "For this reason we should begin in our youth."

"That the Lord will pay us if we work for Him," answered Charley, as Grandpa looked to him for an answer.

"That He will deal justly and generously with every one of us," said Carrie.

"That He does with his own what He thinks best, whether I like it or no," added Mary.

"Well told," added Grandpa, with one of his kindest smiles. "Be good workers for the Lord; He is a good paymaster. Trust Him to make all right."



DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR WAGES.

ANointing JESUS; OR, THE WORK OF TWO WOMEN.

"I HAVE thought I would tell you to-night about two strange acts done by two somewhat peculiar women."

"Oh! do, Grandpa," exclaimed Mary. "I want to learn something that I may do by and by when I become a woman."

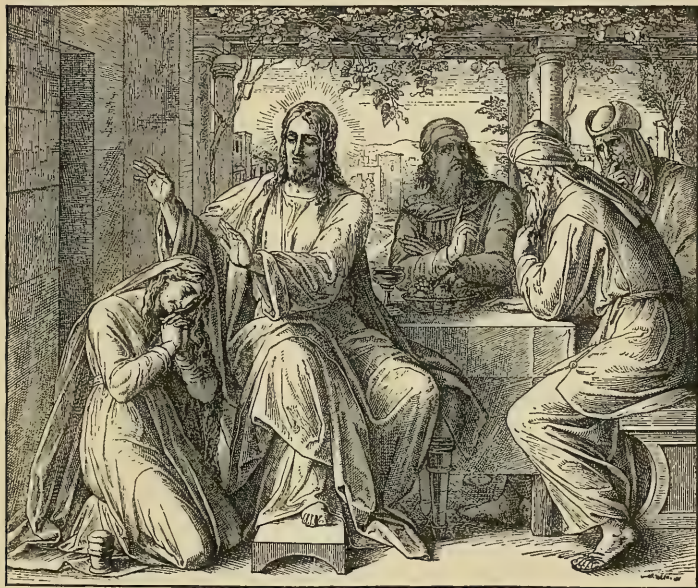
"Both these women bore the same name you do; they were Marys; the one Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus cast seven devils; the other, Mary the sister of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. The account of the first is in Luke vii, and though her name is not given there, yet it follows so closely in the next chapter that name and person are naturally linked together. This Mary had been a very wicked woman, and everybody where she lived knew it. Jesus was in that city one day and a rich man asked Him to his house to dinner. Jesus went, and though the man had invited Him he did not treat Him very nicely. He neither saluted Him with a kiss, gave Him water with which to wash His feet, nor oil to anoint His head, all of which were acts of common civility in that land."

"How odd!" answered Carrie. "Why did they do those things?"

"Men even now kiss each other in that land, just as women kiss each other here. Sandals were worn instead of shoes; these left the feet exposed; so it was refreshing to have them washed after a long and dusty walk. Hats were not worn, but a folded cloth was thrown over the head; so an adjustment of the hair was also necessary. But none of these ordinary comforts were extended by this man, though Jesus was there as his guest."

"I'd have taken my hat and gone off," said Charley. "I wouldn't sail with such a crew as that. But they didn't wear hats, you said."

"But Jesus did not go off," answered Grandpa; "He stayed and the dinner began. As they were eating, who should come in but



"Behold, a woman . . . stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears."—Luke vii, 37, 38.

this well-known woman, Mary Magdalene; she came weeping, she came up behind Jesus as He reclined at the table, as was then the custom, and, kneeling down, she let her tears fall on His feet; then she bent so low that her hair wiped His feet; then she kissed His feet over and over again."

"How sad and humble she was!" said Carrie.

"She had with her a little flask of ointment, such as was used for the hair. This she opened and poured upon the feet of Jesus. While this was going on, the old Pharisee, who pretended to be entertaining Jesus, was thinking to himself that Jesus, if He really were a prophet, would know who this woman was and that He would not permit her to touch His feet even. Jesus knew the thoughts of His entertainer; so He began to tell him of two men, one of whom owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. They were both so poor that they could not pay their debts and their creditor forgave them fully. Which of them then, asked Jesus, suppose you loved him most?"

"I should say the one to whom most was forgiven," answered Carrie.

"So the man answered, and Jesus approved the answer. Then Jesus reminded His entertainer how he had neglected the proper welcome to a guest, while this woman, in her profuse love, had washed His feet with tears, kissing them over and over and anointing them. To the woman Jesus then said, Thy sins are forgiven, and bade her go in peace."

"That was grand!" exclaimed Carrie. "The poor soul was so sorry for the wrong she had done. She loved Jesus with all her heart and wasn't ashamed to show it. I'm glad He forgave her and sent her home happy. That was just like Jesus to do that kind act, wasn't it?"

"It was, indeed," said Grandpa. "A few days before the death of Jesus, He, with many others, was at a feast in Bethany, where Mary, the sister of Lazarus, lived. She loved Jesus very much, for He had been so good to her and her family. She wanted to do something for Him, but what to do she really did not know. Almost everybody has some little keepsake or treasure which they prize very highly. You each have such little treasures."

"Why, yes," replied Mary, "I have a whole box full of treasures, such as they are. But I prize them very highly."

"How big's your box?" asked Charley.

"Big enough for all the treasures I have now, but I'll need a bigger one some day. But go on, please, Grandpa."

"Mary had a beautiful box made of a sort of marble called ala-



"Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus."—
John xii, 3.

baster and filled with fragrant perfumed oil; it was very valuable; some at the feast said it was worth three hundred pence, or a year's wages for a laboring man. Probably it had been the gift of some rich friend or an heirloom in the family. At any rate, it was the best thing Mary had, and she determined Jesus should have the best."

"That was right. But I'm not sure that Jesus would care for a box of perfumery."

"She knew that, too, Mary; so, instead of handing it to Jesus, she approached Him, broke open the box, and poured its contents on His head. The sweet odor filled the room, and everybody was surprised at Mary's act. Some of the disciples called it waste; Judas thought it ought to have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor; so they all had their grumble or their growl or their sour look, till Jesus said, Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon me. He said, too, that wherever His gospel might be preached, her act should be told as a memorial of her, that is, as a means of reminding people of her noble, loving act."

"It was a noble act," said Carrie. "What if it didn't do anybody good? It showed her love to Jesus, and ever since then other people have tried to be like her in showing love to Jesus; that has done good, I'm sure."

"Yes, Carrie. Her example has urged many good women, and men, too, to honor the Lord by all the means in their power. But Jesus added one remark that few understood; but it was full of meaning. She did it for my burial, said He. She did not know how soon He was to die. Less than a week He had to live. He knew, and it met His aching heart's desires. She did more than she dreamed of; so let us do our best, and we may do more than we intend or expect."

"I like that idea, Grandpa," said Carrie. "It is an encouragement to think that when we do the best we can, and it may be that is not much, yet the Lord sees in it more than we do, and sets it to our credit."

"Yes, He knows what our hearts aim to do. Our hands may fail, but He does not forget."

THE TRIUMPHAL MARCH; OR, A WORTHY WELCOME TO THE KING.

“**W**HY didn't everybody love Jesus like those two Marys did, Grandpa? He did so much good and made everybody so happy, I don't see how any person could help loving and serving Him.”

“To love Him, Carrie, and to serve Him as they did, would make many enemies. The rulers were all jealous lest Jesus should gain some advantage over them. Every person whom they saw disposed to honor Him they opposed and abused shamefully. Many for this reason were afraid to follow Jesus. But there was one time when the real feeling of the people did break loose and show itself; it was but a few days before His death. He had been stopping at Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem, and early in the morning He started for the city, followed by a company of His disciples. He usually walked, but this morning He sent two disciples across the valley to another village to get a colt for Him to ride. They brought it, and having thrown their outer garments across its back by way of a saddle, Jesus mounted and rode.”

“Why did He want to ride that day?” asked Charley. “Was He tired, or was it hot?”

“Probably neither in any unusual degree,” answered Grandpa; “but Jesus knew what was to come that day, and part of the programme was that He was to ride. Mary may read the explanations of His wish to ride. You will find it in Matthew xxi, 4, 5.”

Mary quickly found the verses and read: “All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye

the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

"Oh! I see," said Mary; "the prophets had described Christ as coming in that way, so Jesus obeyed the Scriptures, and did come in that way."

"Yes, and as He rode the disciples who were with Him showed Him every honor. As they came near to Jerusalem, they were met by a great company of people who were on their way to find Jesus. These at once caught the idea of the party then with Him, and joined in praising Him as indeed the King whom the Jews for a long time had been expecting. So high did the excitement of their welcome rise that many spread their outer garments in the road for Jesus to ride over. Others, breaking off branches from trees along the way, cast these before Him, as if the common earth was not good enough for one so high and so holy to ride upon. In short, they became enthusiastic for Jesus as their King."

"But why did they throw their clothes in the dirt before Him? That seems queer to me," said Charley.

"It meant the same as if they had thrown *themselves* before Him. By this act they said, Lord Jesus, you are our King; rule over us; ride over us; you are our Ruler now and forever. So they journeyed on, the crowd growing larger every moment. Then some one began to shout, Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna to the Son of David! David, you know, had been their greatest King, and now they believed his long-expected Son, who would be even greater than he, had really come."

"Wasn't Solomon greater than David?" asked Charley.

"In riches and showy wisdom he was, but not in piety and true love to God, which is the greatest good a man can have."

"Why did they say Hosanna? What does that mean?" asked Charley.

"It means, Save now, we pray! or, Send prosperity now, we pray! As they used it, it recognized Jesus as King and called for prosperity

under His rule. Then they added, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Shouting and singing these words from Psalm cxviii and others, they came down the Mount of Olives at the east of Jerusalem and crossed the intervening valley."



"And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and straved them in the way."—Mark xi, 8.

"What did they call that valley, Grandpa?" asked Mary.

"The valley of Jehoshaphat, or of Kedron, from the name of the brook which flows through it. From the Olivet side you can see the city distinctly, and from the city side you can see persons on the op-

posite hill. The great throng from Bethany came trooping down the hillside. Such a commotion and crowd would quickly arouse the people. Matthew says, The city was moved, saying, Who is this? Probably the people thought some famous person was coming from some other land, and that this was causing the tumult, or one of their own great men might be coming. In answer to the question, Who is this? there was but one answer, however. It is Jesus, It is Jesus. So He had a triumphal march into and through the city; men, women, and children bidding Him welcome as their King, which they believed Him to be."

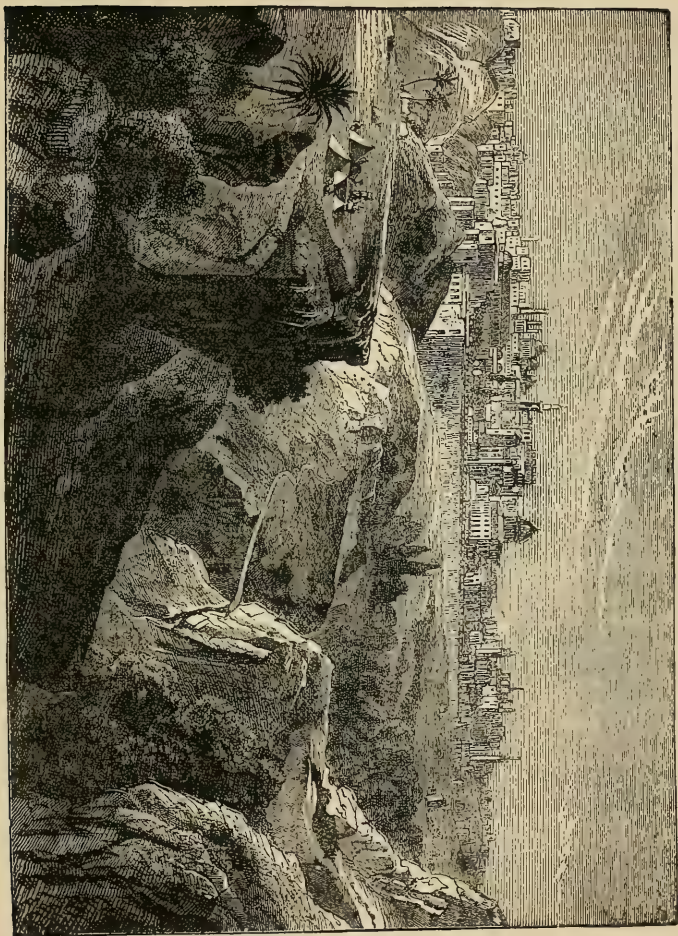
"And what did Jesus do after this great display?" asked Mary.

"He went to the Temple, and there found all sorts of peddlers and venders of small wares, just as He did three years before. So He roused Himself, and once more drove them out of the holy place. He then spent the day healing sick persons and doing all manner of good works. It was a busy day, but Jesus was an active worker, a noble example for all of us. When the day drew toward its close He left the city and went again to Bethany, where He spent the night with His true friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus."

"I have a sweet hymn on this very subject. Let us sing it," said Mrs. Reed. A second invitation was not needed, so they sang:

"When, His salvation bringing,
To Zion Jesus came,
The children all stood singing
Hosanna to His Name;
Nor did their zeal offend Him,
But, as He rode along,
He let them still attend Him
And smiled to hear their song.

"And since the Lord retaineth
His love for children still—
Though now as King He reigneth
On Zion's heavenly hill—
We'll flock around His banner,
We'll bow before His throne,
And cry aloud, Hosanna
To David's Royal Son!"



APPROACH TO JERUSALEM FROM THE SOUTHEAST

GATHERING DARKNESS; OR, LOVE AND SORROW STRANGELY BLENDED.

"**A**ND what have you to tell us to-night?" asked Carrie, as hand-in-hand she and Grandpa entered the sitting-room after supper.

"I have some sad things to talk about for a few nights," answered he. "We have come to those last scenes in the life of the Lord, and they are full of sorrow, though they are full of love."

"But, Grandpa, if Jesus went through those scenes of sorrow and did it for us, we ought to be willing to talk about them, even if they are sad."

"True, Carrie; and we will talk of them. But out of the sadness we will find much light and comfort coming, I am sure. We left Jesus at Bethany, where He spent His last night of rest. It corresponded to Wednesday night, as we name our days. What He said and did that night and on most of Thursday has not been told us. We are certain it was all good and loving, and it doubtless had reference to His death, which was so near."

"I wish we did know," said Carrie, regretfully.

"All we know is that as the afternoon wore away He and the apostles started for Jerusalem that they might eat the Passover there. In the upper room of a friendly man's house they met and for the last time together, ate the Passover as the Jews were then accustomed to do."

"Why don't we do it, too, then?" asked Mary. "We ought to imitate Him—ought n't we?"

"Where He desires us to we should. But when they had eaten

this Passover He established a new feast in memory of Himself; this He commanded them to observe until He should again come back to the earth."

"You speak of the Lord's Supper—don't you, Grandpa?" inquired Mary.

"Yes, dear. That takes the place of the Passover for us. Jesus was very sorrowful as they ate the Passover; He said that one of those twelve apostles, who sat and ate with Him, should betray Him that very night."

"That was Judas!" exclaimed Charley. "Everybody knows him."

"Yes; but he joined the others in asking, Is it I? Is it I? Jesus knew who it was that should betray Him, and when Judas asked, Is it I? Jesus quietly answered, Thou hast said; that is, You have hit it—you are the man."

"Dear me! how could he stand that?" asked Carrie, with something of a shudder.

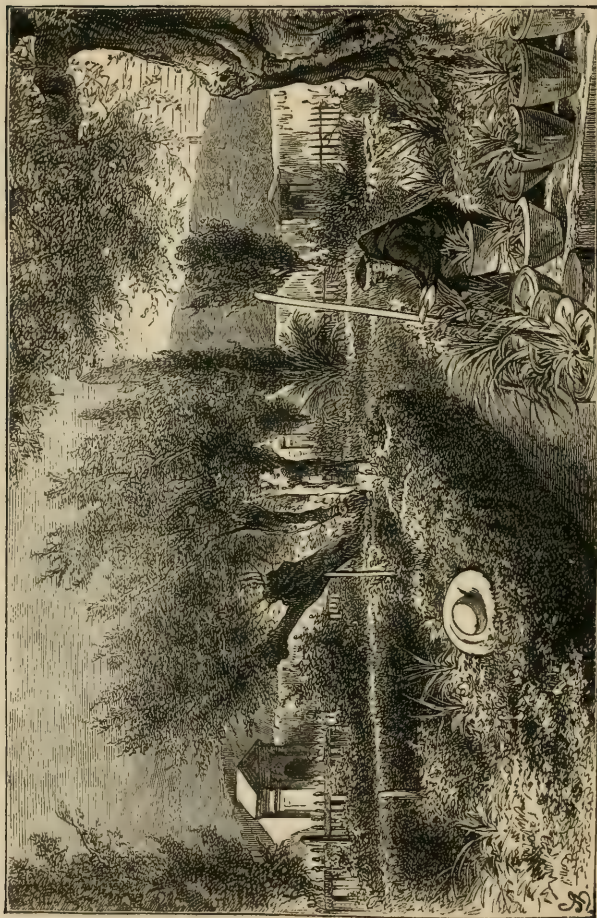
"He could not stand it," answered Grandpa; "he rose and left the room at once, but not till Jesus had said to him, That thou doest do quickly."

"Why did He say that?" asked Charley, with surprise. "I should think He would rather have said, Judas, don't you dare do that wicked thing!"

"Long before that time the prophets had foretold that Jesus should be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, and He would not dodge any of His appointed sufferings. For this reason He urged Judas on; and on he went, meeting the wicked men whom he had already seen and arranging to capture Jesus."

"What did the others say to all this?"

"We are not told, Charley. Probably they said very little; they were too much confused and too sorrowful. But Jesus was not confused. When Judas had gone, the Lord took bread, broke it, and gave to the disciples, telling them all to eat of it, and saying, This



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE AS NOW SEEN.

is my body, which is broken for you. Then He poured some wine into a cup and gave them that to drink, saying it was the new testament—that is, the new agreement or bargain—in His blood, which was shed for the remission or forgiveness of sins.”

“But, Grandpa, His body was not broken then, nor His blood shed. What did He mean by speaking so?”

“His body was so soon to hang on the cross, His flesh being strained and torn and broken there; His blood was so soon to be shed, that He spoke as if both were already done, and none of the disciples could long be in doubt as to what He meant.”

“I see. He meant, My body that will soon be broken, and, My blood that will soon be shed, didn’t He?”

“That was it, darling; and it must have made them feel very sad to hear Jesus talking so. While they were together there He talked over the precious things we find in five full chapters of John’s gospel, from chapter xiii onward. He prayed with them in this upper room, too, as we read in John xvii; then they sang a hymn and went out into the street. They moved along to what is called St. Stephen’s gate, on the east side of the city, out of which they passed through the burial places about the city’s walls and down into the valley. Here they crossed the brook Kedron, and just beyond, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, lay the Garden of Gethsemane, into which they went.”

“Is that garden there now?” inquired Mary.

“Yes,” answered Grandpa; “the same into which Jesus went. It is now in charge of a company of monks, who have a small dwelling in the garden. Around the inside of the walls pictures are hung in cases, representing a variety of scenes in the final hours of Jesus. The garden is kept in good condition, having an abundant supply of flowers, which are sold to visitors. There are eight olive trees now standing in the garden; they are of great age, but are not trees which stood when Jesus visited the spot. The monks, however, point out one as that under which the Lord prayed.”

"Did Jesus talk with them as they went along to the garden?" asked Charley, quite seriously.

"He did. It was bright moonlight; everything was clear and distinct as they went. They could see His sad face as He talked. All that He said on the way is not told, but He did say that He should be smitten that night and that they should be scattered like a flock of sheep. They all declared they would be true to Him, though they died for it. Peter was specially strong in his assertions; but Jesus told him that before the cock should crow for the coming of day he would deny his Lord three times. Talking thus they passed along and entered the garden."

"Oh! it seems almost too solemn to talk about," said Carrie, her blue eyes full of tears.

"At the gate of the garden Jesus left all but Peter, James, and John. A little further on He left them also, telling them to watch. He then went still further into the garden and fell upon the ground in an agony of prayer. In such distress was He that perspiration came out upon Him in great beads and fell to the ground like big drops of blood. While He was praying the disciples all fell asleep. He woke them and prayed again; but again they fell asleep. A second time He woke them, and again they fell asleep. Again He prayed most earnestly that, if possible, His bitter cup of suffering might pass from Him. Then an angel appeared unto Him from heaven, as Luke says, strengthening Him. The end of this story I will read you from Mark's own account. He says of Jesus: And He cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest. It is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners! Rise up; let us go. Lo! he that betrayeth me is at hand!"

"How sad!" said Mary. Carrie had nothing to say, and Charley, who had hardly spoken during the evening, wiped his eyes and tenderly said "Good-night."



HELP FOR THE SUFFERER.

BETRAYED AND BOUND; OR, STILL DEEPER DARKNESS.

"**T**HAT was an awfully sad story about Jesus in the garden," said Carrie to her Grandpa, as she nestled at his side on the arm of his big chair.

"Sad indeed, my child," was his answer. "But that was only the beginning. Deeper darkness was gathering about Jesus every moment."

"Tell us about it all," was Mary's request, which gave voice to the unanimous desire of the family.

"You remember that when Jesus pointed out Judas as the one who should betray Him, that miserable man got up and went out. He knew it was true. He had been plotting that very thing. When he was exposed he might have acknowledged his guilt and abandoned it. Better far to do this than to go on in the wicked scheme. But there was no repentance in him. Right or wrong, exposed or concealed, he meant to put it through. Possibly he pretended to be hurt at what Jesus said. Guilty people often play the part of injured innocence. But whatever was his pretense for going out, out he went at once to the head men of the Sanhedrim, who wanted to catch Jesus and kill Him, and Judas boldly asked what they would pay him if he should hand Jesus over to them."

"That was just horrid!" exclaimed Carrie. "And he had been an apostle! That was too bad!"

"He ought to have had a rope around his neck. I'd like to have given a pull at the other end; he'd have had enough, I'll bet, before I'd let him loose."

"Why, Charley, Charley," exclaimed his mother, "how you talk! God says, Vengeance is mine. He does not say, Vengeance is Charley Reed's."

"All the same, mother; I'd help God by pulling on that rope *hard*, I would."

"He will get to the end of his rope in due time, Charley. God will see that all these things come out right. After some bargaining with the rulers of the Jews, Judas agreed to hand over Jesus for thirty pieces of silver."

"How much money was that?" asked Charley.

"It is not entirely certain, as the exact coin meant is not known. It may have been as little as four dollars and fifty cents, or it may have been as much as twenty-five dollars, but it was not more than this last trifling amount. In either case, it was poor pay for worse work."

"So say we all of us," shouted Charley. "The idea of doing such a dirty job for twenty-five dollars! I'd work for a penny a day first."

"These Jewish rulers were glad enough to get fairly on the track of Jesus, especially under the lead of one who had been an apostle. So they agreed to pay the money, and they gave him some of the Temple guard which was under their control. They also secured a few soldiers, claiming, no doubt, that they were about to make an important arrest, in which they might need the help of armed men."

"The idea!" exclaimed Mary; "and all this while Jesus was talking so lovingly and praying with His disciples, instead of drilling soldiers or stirring up anybody to fight."

"Judas led this official company away from the rulers. Some of them had torches, some had clubs, some had spears and swords. Of course, such a company would attract attention, and idlers would fall in to see what was coming to pass. In this way a rabble soon gathered, night though it was, and all followed after Judas."

"The mean old hulk," muttered Charley, in a tone full of contempt. Grandpa thought it best to let the boy say his say, so without replying he went on with his own story.

"Judas probably expected to catch Jesus in that upper room where he had left Him. Thither he led the officers and the rabble which followed. They reached the house, but it was deserted. The officers and crowd were for the moment disappointed; but said Judas, I know where to find Him. Along the narrow streets he led them to St. Stephen's gate; out of the city they passed hurriedly; through the crowded burial-places they made their way; down the hill, across the brook, up the slope a little distance to the gate of Gethsemane. All is still. They enter stealthily, peering around in the moonlight. There lie eight of His followers asleep. Where is He? Hist! gently! do not wake them! The crowd creeps on into the garden. Gently! there lie three more asleep; but where is He? See! He comes to meet them! He speaks, and they all fall backward to the ground. In an instant they rally; Judas approaches Jesus; he kisses Him, as had been pre-arranged, that no mistake should be made. Then the mob rushes forward and seizes the Lord."

"Let me," said Mrs. Reed, "give you this account in Mark's own words. He tells this story so briefly and yet so beautifully. He says: And immediately while He yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders. And he that betrayed Him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He; take Him, and lead Him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to Him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed Him. And they laid their hands on Him, and took Him."

"Shame on them, shame!" exclaimed Carrie, thoroughly aroused. "Such a crowd to lay their vile hands on such a man! It was an outrage."

"So Peter thought. The commotion had awakened him. He had

taken along an old sword, and in he sprang to help Jesus. The first man he seized was Malchus, a servant of the High Priest. In an instant Peter struck for his head, but the man dodged, and his ear was cut off by the blow of Peter's sword."



"And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.—Mark xiv, 46, 47.

"Pity it wasn't his head," said Charley.

"Jesus didn't think so, my boy. He rebuked Peter for his violence and healed the man's ear at once."

"Put his ear on again, sound and well?" asked Charley, with evident surprise.

"Even so," said Grandpa. "He and Charley are apart again."

"Well, then they let Jesus go, didn't they?" asked the boy.

"No; they brought out their ropes, bound Him, and led Him away. Out of the gate they went; over the brook again; up the hill; through the burial-places; into the gate; through the streets, in the chill night air, to the palace of the High Priest."

"And did Jesus say nothing against this outrage?" asked Mary, with considerable warmth.

"Nothing to prevent it. He spoke to sting the guilty consciences of those who came against Him. Looking Judas squarely in the eye, he said, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"

"That must have stung him good," said Charley, with a movement as if he himself had been stung by a wasp. "But it wasn't half hard enough. He ought to have been stung worse than that."

"What else did He say?" asked Mary.

"Let me read what further He said," answered her mother. "Luke tells us this: Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the Temple, and the elders which were come to Him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the Temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

"With these words," added Grandpa, "He submitted to arrest and was led away a prisoner."

"How cruel!" exclaimed Mary. "What evil had He done, that they should treat Him so?"

"None at all," answered Grandpa. "The rulers had long been jealous of Him, and since His great triumphal march a few days before, they could endure Him no longer, but determined to kill Him."

"And where was Peter all this while, and the other chaps?"

"Of them, Charley, I will try to tell you to-morrow. Now let us say, Good-night."

MIDNIGHT ADVENTURES; OR, DESERTED AND DENIED.

"**N**OW, Grandpa, what about those disciples of Jesus? You said you would tell us of them to-night." In this way Charley started the conversation, and Grandpa willingly began his promised story.

"One short record about the disciples in the excitement at the arrest of Jesus is very sad. It is said, They all forsook Him and fled. One young man attempted to follow, but the mob chased him and seized him by his outer garment, out of which he slipped and made his escape, leaving it in their hands. There was evidently some violence shown by the crowd, which in part accounts for the scattering of the disciples."

"What about Peter and his old sword?" asked Charley.

"There are some facts about Peter of which I ought to speak," said Grandpa, "though you may not like him any the better for them. I refer to his repeated denials of Jesus. The old sword he probably dropped."

"I was wondering whether you meant to skip over that denial," answered Mary. "I know something of it, and I want to hear more of it from you."

"You must remember, in judging of Peter, that he was taken at a great disadvantage. He was tired, cold, discouraged, and hungry. It was just before day; he had been out all night; he was in a despondent mood. Jesus had told him bad news during the night, and had rebuked him—first for sleeping in the garden, and afterward for smiting that man, Malchus. Then Jesus had been arrested and car-

ried off by the mob, and Peter hardly knew what to think or to do. Everything seemed going to ruin. All his expectations were disappointed. The cause he loved, and for which he had left all, seemed on the verge of ruin, and his Master Himself seemed to have failed him."

"I don't wonder he felt badly. Anybody would have been discouraged by so much trouble."

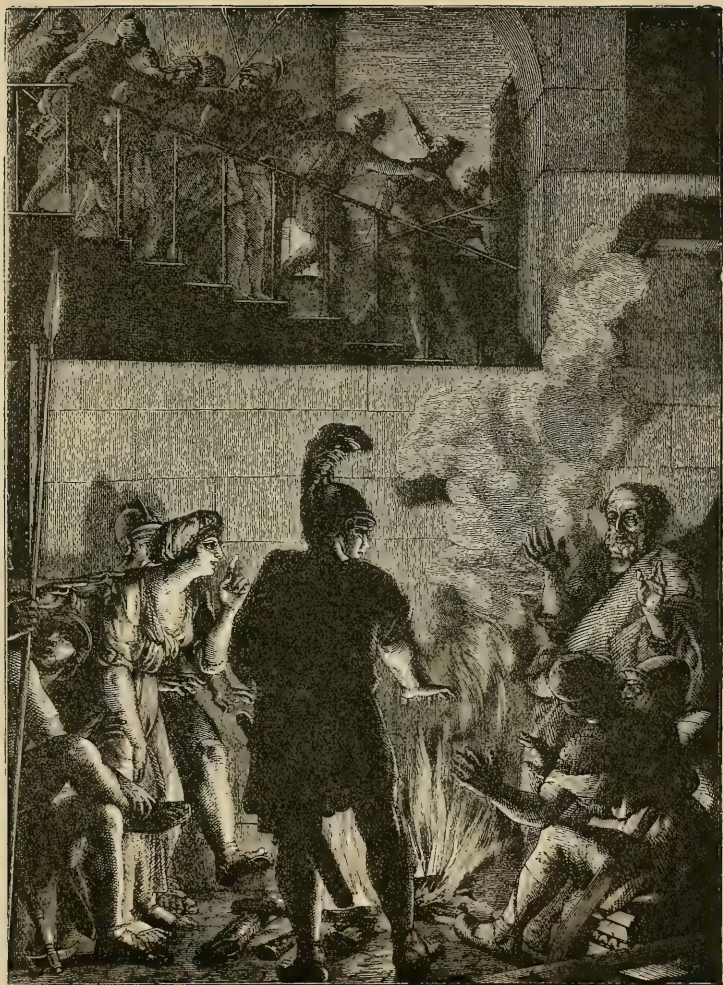
"True, Mary, and all this Jesus knew. But Peter was so bold and self-confident that the Lord felt compelled to teach him a lesson. He told Peter, as they went to the garden, that they all should be offended or stumbled, because of Him that night. Peter did not think it possible. He declared, Though all be offended because of Thee, yet will not I. He thought himself very strong and true, but he had a lesson to learn, and learn it he did that very night, and to his sorrow."

"How did it happen, Grandpa? I am awfully anxious to know about it."

"Well, Charley, it happened in this way. When Jesus was arrested and led off Peter followed a long distance behind. He went all the way to the gate of the High Priest's palace. It was shut and Jesus had been taken in. John and possibly some others of the apostles had gone in after Him, however. John was acquainted there, so he went again to the gate and brought in Peter, who sat down outside the hall of judgment, among the soldiers and servants. They started a fire to warm themselves, and Peter stepped closer to warm himself. They were talking about the arrest of Jesus, and how His disciples scattered and ran, when a servant girl, seeing Peter, shook her finger at him, saying, Thou also wast with Him. Everybody's attention turned at once to Peter. What was he to do? To own that he was with Jesus would bring upon him ridicule, abuse, and perhaps death. What could he do?"

"Own up and die," exclaimed Charley.

"Easier said than done, my boy. Peter wanted to do right, I am



sure ; but he was scared ; so he stumbled out the answer, I know not what thou sayest ; meaning, I don't know what you are talking about. Then he slipped off into the porch near the gate, intending to get away when the door should be opened, but there another servant saw him, probably the one who had admitted him on John's request, and she, too, charged him with having been with Jesus. Then, with an oath, he declared, I do not know the man."

"That was awful!" said Carrie, her eyes moistening as if about to send forth a flood of tears. "How could Peter do so? I'm sure I couldn't say such a thing if I died for it."

"None of us, dear girl, can be quite sure what we would do until we are tried. Peter was quite sure beforehand, yet he fell. Of course, the two charges against Peter and his two denials made talk among the idle bystanders, several of whom, having talked it over, came to him again and said, Surely thou art also one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee—that is, his way of talking showed him to be from Galilee, the home of most of the apostles. Peter saw that things were now getting desperate, so he began to curse and to swear, saying over and over again, I know not the man."

"Worse and worse! How could he do so?" exclaimed Carrie.

"It is, indeed, amazing, but it was done. It is amazing, too, that many now, who know Jesus and think they love Him, never speak for Him nor own Him as their Lord. By their silence they deny Him. They do not use oaths and curses, for no gentleman will swear ; common politeness forbids that.

"To swear is neither brave, polite, nor wise."

"That was three times Peter denied the Lord, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Mary ; just as Jesus said when they were going to the garden, and no sooner did this last denial occur than the cock crew. Then Peter remembered that the Lord had said, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice."

"Poor, poor Peter ! how did he feel then?" asked Carrie.

"Badly enough, I'm sure; but it was done. He could not recall the denials. Just then Jesus was led by, probably on the way to Pilate's judgment-hall, and He looked on Peter. Peter was looking that way, and their eyes met. Jesus was so sad, so reproving, and yet so loving, that the look broke Peter's heart. He could stand it no longer. The record of the gospels is that he went out and wept bitterly."

Big tears were in Carrie's eyes as she said, "Oh! I'm so sorry he did it." Charley, even, was mellowed by the story, and said, "I'm sorry too. It's too bad, so it is!"

"But Peter from this sad lesson became a wiser and better man," continued Grandpa. "The Lord fully and freely forgave him, and set him at work in the church again. He worked hard and long, and at last was so true to his Master that he died a martyr rather than deny Him."

"I remember," said Mary, "that you told us how he was crucified for Jesus' sake."

"And now let us remember not to be boastful and self-confident, but to be watchful and prayerful lest we, too, fall; and let us never be ashamed to acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and our Master. He demands this, and is worthy of it."

"Let us sing that lesson into our hearts," said Mrs. Reed. They all loved to sing, so, without waiting for a another invitation, they gathered at the organ and sang the old hymn:

"Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee?
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glories shine through endless days!

"Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No! when I blush be this my shame,
That I no more revere His name."

A MOCKERY OF JUSTICE.

OR, OVERAWED BY A MOB.

“WE are all very anxious, Grandpa, to have you tell us about the trial of Jesus. The account in the Gospels seems mixed up a good deal, and we want to understand it better.”

“I am glad to oblige you, Mary, and the others, too, and help straighten out the account of the Lord’s trial. That trial was very unfair from beginning to end. The night arrest in the garden was an outrageous and brutal affair. After it took place Jesus was hurried along as though he were a common culprit. On reaching the city, he was taken at once to the house of Caiphas, the High Priest and chief of the Sanhedrim.”

“That was where Peter denied him, wasn’t it?” asked Carrie.

“That was the place. Annas, father-in-law to the High Priest, was waiting for the coming of the party. When he saw the prisoner really in their hands he sent Him, after a little delay, and bound as He still was, to Caiphas and some members of the Sanhedrim, who had hurriedly come together. This Caiphas had long before counseled that Jesus should be put to death, and now, he whose mind had long been made up against the prisoner, who was his bitterest enemy, sits as a judge on a question involving that prisoner’s life or death.”

“Outrageous!” exclaimed Mary. “Why, with us a man who has any opinion concerning a prisoner’s guilt or innocence is not allowed to sit on a jury even, much less could he act as judge. He could not deal justly.”

"But other abuses were heaped on Jesus. While Annas and his cronies were questioning Jesus, one rude fellow who stood by struck Him a blow, an indignity and piece of injustice which even the meek and lowly sufferer Himself rebuked. But after this one expression of dissent He bore all they heaped upon Him and did not murmur. These unjust judges wanted, above all else, to put him to death, but they had not the right to do this in any case. So they sent Jesus to Pilate, the Roman Governor."

"What had he to do with the Jews?" asked Charley.

"A great deal. The Jews were a conquered people and the Romans ruled them. Pilate had been appointed by the Roman Emperor to govern at Jerusalem. He alone could inflict the penalty of death in that city, and for this reason they hurried Jesus off to him, hoping thus to have their prisoner sentenced to die. Pilate was very anxious to please the Jews. They were keeping their Passover feast, and to go into the common court-room at Pilate's palace would have made them *unclean*, as they called it; that is, unfit to enter the Temple and engage in religious services. To favor them in this matter Pilate went out of the judgment hall to the open court-yard to meet them, and to hear what they had to say. So they started with a victory over him."

"He was too willing, I think," said Charley. "They might have waited till their feast was over, if they were so particular about themselves."

"He was too willing, indeed," continued Grandpa, "and yet he wanted to save Jesus, and tried to do so. He said many things in His behalf, but he did not say with manly decision, You shall do Him no harm."

"That's what he ought to have said."

"Certainly, Mary. The rulers went on and accused Jesus of various misdeeds, and as they did so it came out that He belonged to the province of Galilee, which lay in the northern part of Palestine. Then Pilate thought he could rid himself of further trouble.

Herod, who was Governor of Galilee, was then in Jerusalem, so Pilate sent Jesus off to him. But Jesus would not answer a word to any of Herod's questions, which so enraged him that he and his men mocked and ridiculed Jesus, and put on Him an old, cast-off



"Pilate . . . brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat . . . and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king."—John xix, 13, 14.

royal robe, burlesquing His title as King of the Jews, and in this garb sent Him back to Pilate."

"That was shameful," exclaimed Mary. "To make such sport of a low, base drunkard would be bad enough, but to do it with Jesus is simply vile."

"Yes, and doubtless a crowd followed, hooting and jeering as He was led so patiently through the streets. When Pilate found Jesus again on his hands, he was more than ever perplexed, and the people were more than ever clamorous that he should sentence Jesus to death. Pilate then proposed to scourge Him and let Him go; but no—they yelled the more, Crucify Him! crucify Him! Then Pilate brought out Jesus and showed Him to the crowd, saying, Behold your King! but they raved like madmen, and would be satisfied with nothing but His death. To make Pilate's case more difficult, his wife sent word to him that she had suffered terribly with dreams about Jesus, and she warned her husband not to do anything against Him; but the people raved, declaring that Jesus had claimed to be a King, and if Pilate spared Him he was not true to Cæsar, the only rightful King, as they pretended very loyally to believe. In this way they overawed Pilate."

"The old sneak!" exclaimed Charley, with disgust.

"At this point Pilate brought out a basin of water and washed his hands before the people, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; to which the rulers answered, His blood be upon us and our children."

"What good did washing his hands do?" asked Carrie, her face aglow with interest.

"None at all. Water cannot wash our sins away. It was simply a sign to the people that he did not think it right to crucify Jesus; and yet, knowing it to be wrong, he gave commandment that He should be crucified at once."

"The miserable fellow! A pretty Governor he was. Whom did he govern? Why, the people governed him. He ought to have been ashamed of himself!" Such were Carrie's excited outbursts, and the agreement of the others with her views was clearly shown by their approving looks.

"What was done after he ordered them to crucify Jesus?" asked Mary.

"Then he was cruelly whipped on His bare back and handed over to the soldiers. While preparations for the crucifixion were making they put a crown of thorns on His head, a reed in His hand for a sceptre, and drew the old royal robe over Him again. They also



"And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull."—John xix, 17.

struck Him with their hands and with the reed; they spat upon Him, bowed in derision before Him, mocked Him, and made all the sport of Him which a crowd of low, base fellows could invent. When all was ready, they put His own robe on Him again, and, compelling Him to carry the heavy wooden cross, they led Him out to the place



VIA DOLOROSA OF JERUSALEM AND ECCE HOMO ARCH.

of execution. In Jerusalem to-day there is a street called the Via Dolorosa, or Sorrowful Way, along which, it is said, Jesus carried the cross. Across this street there is an old arch supporting an inclosed balcony. The story is that from the window of this balcony Pilate showed Jesus to the crowd and said, Behold the man—*Ecce Homo*, in the Greek language—from which this is called the *Ecce Homo Arch*."

"But is that story true?" asked Mary.

"Probably not; yet the arch is very old, and is a fragment from some older building than those now about it. It is said to have been part of the palace occupied by Pilate. But whether by this way or some other way He bore His cross, matters little. He carried it until He fainted under the load; then they seized one of the followers, a man named Simon, and compelled him to bear it. So Jesus was led to Calvary."

"And did not Jesus complain in all this?"

"No, Carrie; we have no record that He complained in it all. He knew how unjust it all was, but He bore it, sorrowing most of all that men could be so blind to their own best good."

As Grandpa ended this statement, Mrs. Reed touched the organ very sweetly, accompanying herself as she sang the old, old hymn:

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.

"The consecrated cross I'll bear
Till death shall set me free;
And then go home, my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

"So will I bear the cross," said Carrie, warmly yet tenderly. "I'll do anything for Jesus."

IT IS FINISHED; OR, THE TRAGEDY COMPLETED.

“OUR subject to-night is the saddest of our series,” said Grandpa to his little company of hearers. “It takes us to Calvary, where Jesus was crucified.”

“Where was Calvary, Grandpa, and what kind of a place was it?” asked Carrie.

“It was the place of public execution just outside the city walls at Jerusalem. The Roman name, Calvary, and its older Hebrew name, Golgotha, both mean a skull, and may have been given because it was not uncommon to see the remains of dead criminals there, though probably it was due to the form of a round, skull-shaped rock on which the executions took place.”

“Is that rock there now?” inquired Mary.

“It is not altogether certain. Outside the present walls of Jerusalem there is nothing corresponding to Calvary, but inside the walls and in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre the traditional and probably the true Calvary is shown. There is in this place a rounded rock with an indentation, which is claimed to be the very socket in which the cross of Jesus was inserted. A crack in the rock is shown also, which, it is affirmed, was made by the earthquake when He died. Over this rock is a little chapel very richly ornamented with silver and gold.”

“And can anybody see the rock, Grandpa?” asked Charley.

“Anybody who goes there at the appointed times and pays the proper fees to those in charge of the place.”

“But,” interposed Carrie, “I have often heard of Mount Calvary,

and there is a hymn about a green hill far away where Jesus died. Do you mean there is no hill or mount?"

"There is none, my dear, to the best of my knowledge and belief. But that matters very little; there was a place called Calvary, and there the Lord was crucified."

"How did they crucify Him, Grandpa?" asked Mary, with some hesitation, as if the subject was too sacred to be talked of.

"There were different methods, but by any one of them the victim suffered fearful agonies, and died by the most terrible tortures. In the case of Jesus it is probable that the cross was laid upon the ground, He being placed on His back upon it. His arms were then stretched upon the cross-piece and huge nails were driven through the palms of His hands, fastening them to the wood. His feet were then adjusted one upon the other upon a projecting block near the foot of the cross, and one great nail was driven through both feet and into the block. When He was thus fixed to the cross, it was lifted up, He hanging upon it, and all His weight being thrown upon the mangled flesh of the hands and feet. The foot of the cross was then dropped into the socket prepared for it, and so He was left to die."

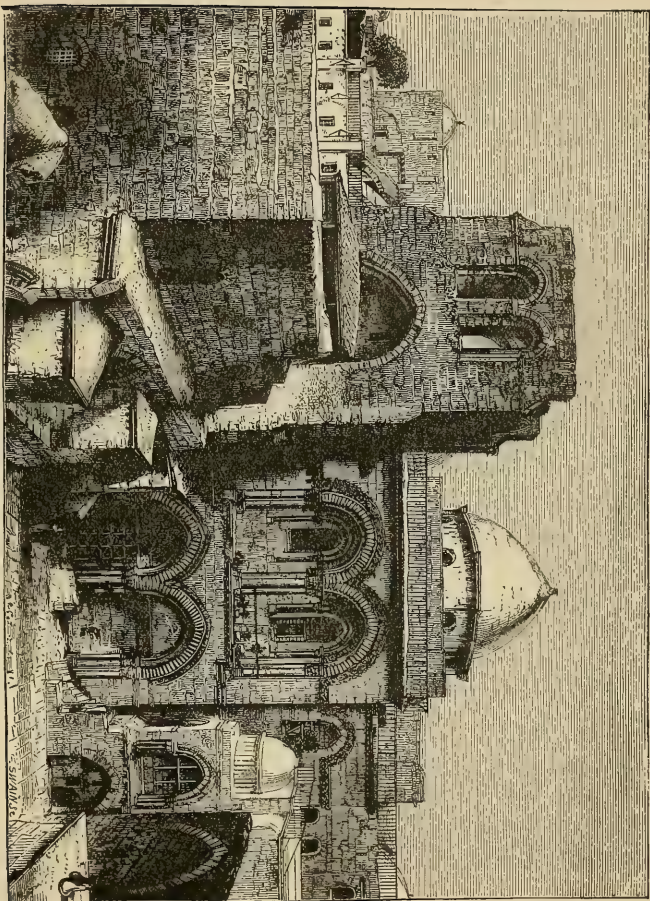
"How terrible!" groaned Carrie. "And Jesus, who never did harm to any person, endured all that!"

"So great was the anguish of crucifixion that a stupefying drink was usually given the victim before it was begun. This drink was offered Jesus, but He refused it, preferring to retain His senses, even though He felt to the full the fearful pangs of His execution."

"What did He say?" asked Charley, evidently thinking some protest must have been made to such horrid work.

"As the Roman soldiers nailed Him to the cross He prayed for them, saying, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

"How lovely!" was Mary's comment, while Charley looked surprised and Carrie wiped her blue eyes very often. Directly Charley recovered himself and asked, "What else did He say?"



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE AT JERUSALEM.

"While on the cross He said several other things, making seven sayings in all. When the cross had been fixed in an upright position and the first gush of agony had passed, Jesus saw His mother, with other women and John, standing near the cross. His heart yearned with love toward her. What He then said Mary may read from John xix, 25-27."

Mary read: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

"Who was that disciple?" asked Charley.

"John. He often speaks of himself in this modest way, making no mention of his own name. He always took care of Jesus' mother after that."

"How terrible it must have been for her to stand there and see Jesus suffer!"

"Yes, Mary; and her terrible experience has given rise to one of our oldest and grandest poems, the *Stabat Mater*, as it is called from its opening words in the Latin language. It is very old, having been written probably about six hundred years ago. It is so sweet and plaintive that it has been set to music by some of the greatest musical masters of the world and has been translated into a great many languages."

"Let me give you a few of its verses," said Mrs. Reed, who had turned to the hymn in one of her many books of poetry. She read:

"Stood th' afflicted mother weeping,
Near the cross her station keeping,
Whereon hung her Son and Lord;
Through whose spirit sympathizing,
Sorrowing and agonizing,
Also passed the cruel sword.

- "Oh! how mournful and distressed
Was that favored and most blessed
Mother of the Only Son!
Trembling, grieving, bosom heaving,
While perceiving, scarce believing,
Pains of that Illustrious One.
- "Who the man, who, called a brother,
Would not weep, saw he Christ's mother
In such deep distress and wild?
Who could not sad tribute render
Witnessing that mother tender
Agonizing with her Child?
- "For His people's sin atoning
Him she saw in torments groaning,
Given to the scourge's rod;
Saw her darling offspring dying,
Desolate, forsaken, crying,
Yield His spirit up to God."

All sat silent for a moment when these verses had been read, Carrie in tears, the others looking as though they might easily be. Grandpa then said:

"Jesus spoke next to the dying thief at His side and assured him he should enter Paradise that very day. Then He cried, I thirst! then, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Then, as He was about to die, It is finished! and at last, Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

"And then did He die?"

"Yes, Carrie; then He died, having hung upon the cross about six hours—most of the time in silence and much of it in darkness so great that night seemed to have come at noonday."

"Where can I find those sayings, Grandpa? I want to learn them."

"Not in any one gospel, Mary. But from all the gospels you can readily gather them. Look near the end of each gospel, where the crucifixion is described, and you will find them all."

"Thanks. I'll learn them." "And I, too," added Carrie.

"When Jesus died there was a terrific scene. Let me read it from Matthew's account: Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold, the vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened. . . . Now, when the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus saw the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

"I don't wonder they said that," was Mary's comment. "I only wonder that everybody else did not say it."

"There is a beautiful hymn we should all know," said Mrs. Reed. "It was written in the Hindostanee language by Krishnu Pal, the first Hindoo who became a Christian. It fits this story of Jesus on the cross."

"O thou, my soul! forget no more
The Friend who all thy sorrows bore;
Let every idol be forgot,
But, O my soul! forget Him not!"

"Oh! no, till life itself depart,
His name shall cheer and warm my heart—
And lisping this from earth I'll rise,
And join the chorus of the skies."

"When it was sure He was dead," Grandpa resumed, "a rich man named Joseph, with Nicodemus—who had gone by night to Jesus, as we have seen—begged His body of Pilate that they might prepare to bury it. Permission was granted; so they took the body from the cross, wrapped it in a linen sheet with gums and spices, as was then customary, carried it into a neighboring garden where Joseph had just built a new tomb, and into this they tenderly placed the dead form of their beloved Lord. Joseph, Nicodemus, John, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and a woman named Salome, were there."

"Where were all the others?" asked Charley.

"Peter was away weeping over what he had done; Judas, in remorse, had hung himself; the others, discouraged and worn out, had scattered to their homes or among their friends. So it came to pass



"They took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock."—Mark xv, 46.

that Jesus had a small funeral. After the body was laid in the tomb a great stone was rolled upon its entrance. On this stone Pilate then put the official seal of the government and set a guard of soldiers to watch, lest the disciples should come and steal the body. So Jesus lay in the tomb; His life in the flesh was over."

THE OPENED TOMB;

OR, FROM DEATH TO LIFE AGAIN.

"I AM so glad Jesus did not stay in that terrible tomb. How awful it would have been had He never risen again."

"Yes, Mary, it would have been awful for Him, and for us, too, for on the fact of His resurrection rest His power to save and His authority to teach. If Christ be not risen, Paul says, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

"Please, Grandpa, tell us about the resurrection," said Carrie. "I hear about it at Easter, but I want you to tell me. I understand you better."

"You all remember how the tomb was closed, and fastened and watched. The burial occurred on Friday, near dark. All Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath, everything was quiet about the tomb. Possibly some stragglers walked out to look at it as a matter of curiosity, merely. The burial had been hurriedly done on Friday, his friends intending to do the customary rites more carefully after the Sabbath. Early on Sunday the faithful women started with the needed spices and other material to wrap the body properly and lay it away. It was hardly daylight and as they went they were wondering how they should roll the stone from the mouth of the tomb. When they came near enough to see, to their surprise they found the stone was rolled away, and hurrying to its open door, they found the tomb was empty."

"How did it get open?" asked Charley. "And I thought a big lot of soldiers were there watching it."

"Let Mary read the explanation from Matthew xxviii, 2-4."

The place was quickly found and Mary read : " And behold, there was a great earthquake : for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."

" Ah," said Mrs. Reed, " that recalls those stirring verses of the grand Easter Hymn :

" Angels, roll the rock away !
Death, yield up thy mighty prey !
See ! He rises from the tomb,—
Rises with immortal bloom.

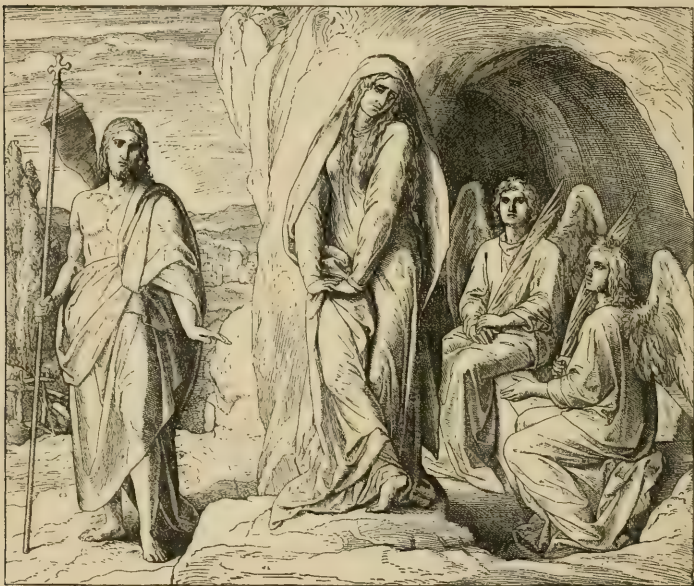
" Lift, ye saints, lift up your eyes ;
Now to glory see Him rise ;
Hosts of angels on the road
Hail and sing the rising Lord."

" That tells the story. The angel rolled away the stone ; Jesus rose ; the keepers, when recovered from their fright, fled to the city and excused themselves as best they could. When Mary Magdalene saw the tomb open she ran back to the city to Peter and John, telling them the body had been stolen. The other women went direct to the tomb and saw an angel who told them Jesus had risen, and sent them to tell the news. Peter came next and John, but finding the body gone they were sore distressed, and went back to their homes."

" They scared too easily," commented Charley.

" Then Mary came again from the city and stood outside the open sepulchre, weeping. So deep was her grief that she saw nobody, though the risen Jesus and two of His angels were near at hand. Directly she looked into the tomb and saw the angels sitting, one at the head and one at the foot of the place where Jesus had lain. Why weepest thou ? was the question they asked her. She replied that they had taken away her Lord, and she knew not where they

had lain Him. Hardly had she answered, when, turning about, she saw a man standing near. In the dim light her tear-filled eyes did not make clear whom the person was. He asked why she wept, and she answered Him as she had answered the angels, but the man said,



"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping."—John xx, 11.

Mary! Then she knew the voice ; it was Jesus who spoke. Falling down before Him, she worshipped Him in the gladness of her loving heart."

"That was grand!" exclaimed Carrie. "How happy she must have been!"

"Yes; and she was the first to see Jesus after He rose. Later in the day He appeared to the other women, then to Peter, then to two disciples whose names are not given, and at last to all the apostles, except Thomas, who was absent."



"Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She . . . saith unto him . . . Master."—John xx, 16.

"How happy His resurrection must have made them," said Mary.
"It did, indeed. They had but one story to tell that day. The Lord is risen, indeed! The Lord is risen, indeed! was their glad cry; and as one after another saw Him, and came to tell the news, their joy knew no bounds."

"How did He appear to them, Grandpa? I don't understand," said Charley.

"Two disciples started to walk to their home," began Grandpa, in explanation. "It was some ten miles from Jerusalem, in a village called Emmaus. They were very much disappointed and discouraged, and as they walked along they talked about the sufferings and death of Jesus; also about a rumor they had heard of His having risen from the dead. While talking thus a person, whom they did not recognize, joined them and asked why they were so sad. They told Him, and as they walked together they talked of what the Bible said about the Saviour, whose coming it promised. The person who had joined them talked so delightfully about the Scriptures that when the men reached their home, they insisted on His spending the night with them. They wanted to talk further with Him. He went in, sat down to supper, blessed the bread, and broke it, and then they suddenly saw it was Jesus Himself who was their guest."

"What a surprise! But, Grandpa, how was it they did not know Him sooner? It seems to me I would have known Him in a minute."

"So it seems to me, Carrie, but Luke says of these men, Their eyes were holden, meaning that they were restrained, or held back, from knowing Him. God meant this journey to go just so far before they should know with whom they were. When it had gone far as He desired, He permitted them to know Jesus."

"I guess they kept Him all night, when they found out who He was," said Charley.

"They would gladly have done so, I am sure," replied Grandpa, "but when they were sure it was He, off He went, disappearing instantly from their sight. Then they hurried back to Jerusalem to tell what they had seen. They arrived, but Jesus had been there before them and had departed again, leaving the disciples rejoicing together and praising God."

"I remember," said Mrs. Reed, "how lovingly those disciples



A MEMORABLE TALK AT THE WAYSIDE

talked about this interview with Jesus. After He had left them, and probably while walking back to Jerusalem, they could talk of nothing else, and they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"

"They all felt that way," said Grandpa. "A happier set of men and women never lived. They praised God and rejoiced together all the time."

"Well they might rejoice," said Mary. "And this is the reason why Easter is kept so joyfully, is it not, Grandpa?"

"Yes; wherever Jesus is known there is joy in the Easter festival. And the first day of the week is the sacred day of Christians, because on that day Jesus rose. By the early disciples it was for this reason called the Lord's day. And now, since the Lord has risen, there is one more scene of which I want to tell you. To-morrow evening we will try to consider His ascension, which was His return in triumph to His Father, from whom He came."

"Mary spoke of the joyful observance of Easter," said Mrs. Reed. "Only to-day I came across an account written fully fifteen hundred years ago by Gregory, a very worthy Greek bishop. He describes the joys of Easter in his times, and says: All labor ceased, all trades were suspended, the husbandman threw down his spade and plow and put on his holiday attire, the very tavern-keepers left their gains. The roads were empty of travelers, the sea of sailors. The mother came to church with the whole band of her children and domestics, her husband and the whole family rejoicing with her. All Christians assembled everywhere as members of one family. The poor man dressed like the rich, and the rich wore his gayest attire; those who had none of their own borrowed of their neighbors; the very children were made to share in the joy of the feast by putting on new clothes."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Charley, "those were the good old times we read of!"

THE CONQUEROR'S RETURN;

OR, A MARVELOUS ASCENSION.

"**H**OW many people saw Jesus after He rose from the dead?" asked Carrie when the family party had assembled once more.

"I cannot answer that fully; I do not know. But Paul gives an answer sufficiently explicit in I Corinthians xv."

"I have it!" shouted Mary in an instant; "and here is what you want, I think. Beginning with the fourth verse, it says, That He was buried and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep; after that He was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all, He was seen of me also."

"Here were a great many appearances of Jesus, as you see," said Grandpa, "and they were to different people, in widely separated places, and scattered over a period of forty days. If any one had become excited and was misled about this matter, there was plenty of time for them to cool off and become undeceived."

"Tell us about some of these visits, please. I want to understand them better," said Carrie, drawing her chair closer to Grandpa's.

Putting his arm about her, he began: "Some three or four weeks after Jesus rose, Peter and six other apostles concluded to leave Jerusalem and go to the Sea of Galilee to catch some fish. I do not think they meant to give up the work Jesus had for them to do. On the other hand, I think the truth is that they were out of money. In-

stead of idly depending on other people for support, they decided to go to work and turn an honest penny for themselves. Off they started, making a tramp of some fifty miles or more to the fishing grounds. They had friends and kindred there; so boats and nets were easily secured. They were good fishermen, knowing when, where, and how to fish, and at it they went in good earnest. They began at dark, but after working all night they had caught nothing."

"Had poor luck, as we boys say," interposed Charley.

"Yes, and they were about to quit. They had pulled in near to shore and were fixing up to go home. Just then they discovered a man standing on the beach. In the dim light of the morning and the mist they did not distinguish who it was. Directly the Stranger spoke to them, inquiring whether they had any meat or food—as though He had come down to buy fresh fish from the boat, as was common there and is still common in all fishing sections. Of course, they had none, and so they told Him. He then ordered them to cast their net on the right side of the ship."

"Why on that side rather than the other?" asked Mary.

"I don't know. It was not the regular thing for them to do, or He would simply have said, Cast your net again. It may be the right side lay to deeper water, or it may have lain toward the shore; we do not know, except that it was not the usual side. In casting on the right they acted simply on the direction of the Stranger on the shore; somehow they were willing to do as He said. And they were rewarded; for immediately their net was filled with a splendid mess of big fish. Indeed, there were so many that they could not lift the net to the deck of the boat, but had to haul it out on the bank, where they found in it a hundred and fifty-three large fishes."

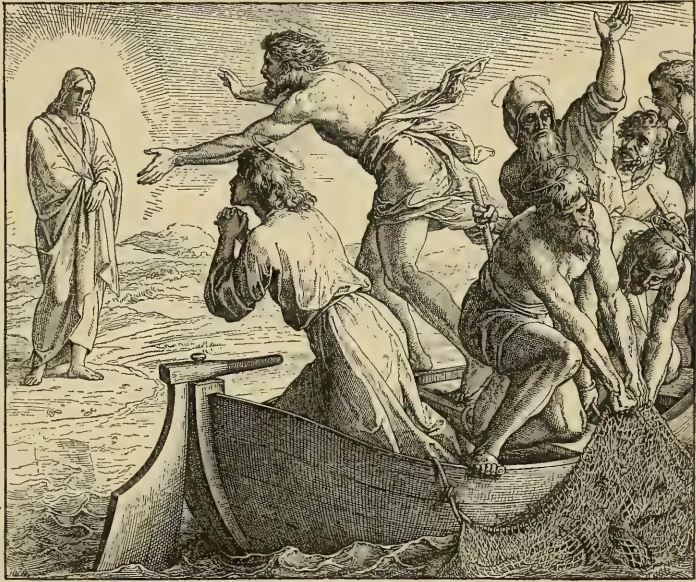
"Hey, boys!" exclaimed Charley; "that was fishing worth doing—wasn't it? That would suit me tip-top."

"When they found their net was so full, John at once said, It is the Lord! Of that he was sure; no other person's word could have had such an effect. Peter, with his old zeal, cared no more for land-

ing the fish, but over he plunged and to the shore he paddled to be the first with Jesus. The others landed the fish and counted them."

"Then what?" asked Carrie, as Grandpa paused a moment.

"When they reached the shore they found a fire burning and fish



"When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him . . . and d'ra cast himself into the sea."—John xxi, 7.

already cooking, also a plentiful supply of bread. Jesus then fed them, and they all had a very precious talk together. Turning to Peter and calling him by name, He asked in the most impressive way, Lovest thou me? Three times Jesus pressed this question, and three times Peter answered most positively that he did love the

Lord, after which the Lord ordered him to watch over and feed His flock and told him of the martyr's death he should finally die."

"So Peter was forgiven for all he said and did in denying Jesus, was he?" asked Mary.

"Fully and freely forgiven, and so much wiser and stronger was he now that he could lead the apostles and stand firm and faithful."

"That was good," said Carrie, as if relieved of a heavy burden. "I do like Peter; he was so earnest."

"After some further loving talk the Lord left this happy party, and they became more devoted than ever to Him and His work."

"I'm sure they had reason to," was Mary's comment. "They were sure He was then alive though He had died, and they could not doubt His power or His love."

"The last appearance of the Lord to His disciples was by far the grandest. It occurred forty days after His resurrection. He met His disciples that day in Jerusalem, and Luke says in the last verses of his gospel, He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while He blessed them He was parted from them and carried up into heaven."

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Carrie. "How sweet that walk with them must have been! But just how was He parted from them?"

"Turn to Acts i, 9-11, and read for yourself."

Carrie found the place and read: "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

"How grand!" exclaimed Mary. "And how did the disciples feel after that sight?"

"Luke says, They worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with

great joy, and were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God."

"Well they might worship Him and be happy, too," said Mary. "It seems to me that even I could have been an apostle after all this."



"While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."—Acts i, 9.

"After the ascension their real work began. People were aroused everywhere, and thousands of converts were added to the Church in a single day. Churches grew rapidly, and it was not long till the name of Jesus was praised in all parts of the world."

TALKING IN STRANGE TONGUES;

OR, POWER FROM ON HIGH.

"TEN days after Jesus ascended there was an exciting time in Jerusalem. Shall I tell you about that?"

"Oh! yes, yes!" came from the children, and Mrs. Reed also, so Grandpa began:

"Can any of you tell to what I refer?"

"A big fire," answered Charley, without an instant's delay.

"Pshaw! Charley; will you ever sober down?" replied Mary, who then added, "You tell us, Grandpa. We only spoil things by guessing."

"When talking with His disciples in that upper room on the night in which He was betrayed, Jesus said a great deal about a Comforter, whom He would send them. They were well enough satisfied to have Jesus Himself stay right along, but He said it was expedient, or better for them that He should go away, because if He went this Comforter would be sent."

"Whom did He mean by the Comforter?" asked Carrie.

"We will see directly. He told them many great things this Comforter would do for them. He would bring to their remembrance what Jesus had taught; He would lead them into all truth; He would teach them what to say; He would reprove the evil doers in the world, and open their minds and hearts to the truth; and in many other wonderful ways He would comfort the disciples and help them in their work."

"But who is this Comforter?" asked Charley, looking puzzled at what Grandpa was saying.

"We will see in a few minutes. The name Jesus gave this person was the name used for those we call lawyers, who are men called to our aid when we are in legal trouble. They advise us, speak for us, and do for us all we may need. So this promised Helper was to do for the disciples."

"Tell us who He is, please," said Carrie, in a coaxing way.

"In a moment, darling. When the Lord had His last talk with the disciples, just before He ascended, He said: And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. He meant this promised Helper whose coming would give them power, and for this power they were to wait at Jerusalem. And now for His own explanation. In that same talk He said: Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

"Oh! the Holy Ghost we sing of, and hear of, is the Comforter," exclaimed Mary. "But, Grandpa, dear, I don't know just what this means yet."

"Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, is the name given to that Divine person, or power, which, though unseen by us, teaches, helps, and comforts those who love the Lord Jesus. This power they were to have, and obedient to Jesus they waited for it; not idly nor carelessly, but with prayer and hope, as they met together day by day. Ten days passed after Jesus ascended and the day of that great excitement, of which I spoke, arrived. It was known among the Jews as the day of Pentecost."

"Pentecost!" shouted all at once. "And what is Pentecost?"

"The word means the fiftieth day. It was applied to the fiftieth day after the Passover. On this one day there was a joyful feast of the Jews in honor of the gathered harvest. Many Jews from other parts of the world stayed from the Passover for this festival, and then went to their homes."

"What made the excitement on this day?" asked Mary. "I am awfully anxious to get at it."

"I will tell you. On this day Peter and the apostles, with about a hundred men and women, were together, praying. Suddenly, a



*"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."—
Acts ii, 3.*

rushing sound, like that of a tremendous wind, was heard. Looking up, they saw in the air above them what seemed to be little tongues of flame, and these descended and rested upon the disciples. This was a sign from God, showing them that the long-promised power had now come."

"But didn't these flames burn them?" asked Charley, with evident concern.

"They were not flames, my boy; but were in form and motion like flames. No sooner had these tongues rested on the disciples than they found themselves full of new power. The first change they noticed was their ability to speak fluently in languages they had never learned or even heard before."

"What good was that?" asked Charley.

"Much—very much. You remember I said many strangers waited over in Jerusalem to attend this joyous feast. So it was then; from all parts of the known world there were devout men lodging in the Holy City. Turn to Acts ii, Mary, and read from verses 9-11 the nationalities represented there."

With considerable stumbling and staggering among the names of the nations, Mary read the verses as follows: "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians."

"Glad I didn't live in any of those places," exclaimed Charley.

"Word went rapidly through the city as to what had occurred and these men came running in to see the strange sight, when, lo! every man of them was preached to in his own mother-tongue. No wonder they were amazed and asked what it all meant. Explanation was ready. Peter's explanation only is given; but the others gave the same, no matter in what language they said it. Peter told them, in answer to their questions, This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy."

"Oh, ho! that was the promise of the Father, then—wasn't it? He had promised all this by Joel long before Jesus came—hadn't He?"

"That was it, Carrie. And every man was made to understand this, no matter what his language was."

"There was some use in the languages, then—wasn't there?" added the boy, in a convinced tone.

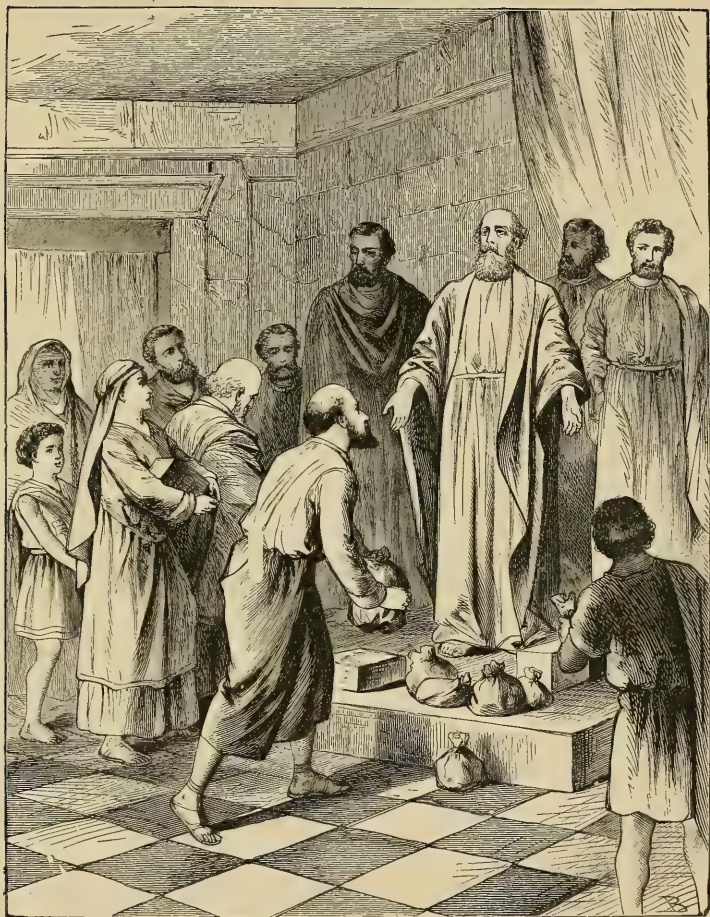
"Indeed there was. And the disciples found another new power; they understood the Bible and the words of Jesus as they never did before; now it was all clear and beautiful. And they had a new power in that they were made bold. They were terribly frightened when Jesus was crucified, but now they feared nobody; they spoke the truth with clearness and force to all their hearers. And the hearers felt this power; they felt that they were sinners, and they cried out, What shall we do? When told to repent and be baptized, they did it at once, and in that one day three thousand persons joined the Church."

"That was grand! It would not take long at that rate to go through the whole world," said Carrie. "But," she asked, after a moment's thought and with some concern, "did they all hold out as good and true members?"

"The narrative in Acts says they all continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. People everywhere felt the power of those early disciples. And well they might; for not only did they do what most church members do—go to church and behave in a proper manner—but they did far more, as you may see by looking at Acts iv, 34, 35."

"I have it!" exclaimed Carrie. "It says this: Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

"That was a hard thing to do, I should say," remarked Mary.



BRINGING IN THE MONEY.

"To give up all your property for the good of others is more than most people will consent to."

"So two members of that early Church found it. They had not the courage to do differently from others; so they attempted to deceive the apostles, pretending to lay the full price of their property at their feet while really keeping back a part of it for themselves. Who were they?"

"Ananias and Sapphira!" answered the girls, Charley bringing up the rear with the exclamation, "They were knocked out for telling a lie—weren't they?"

"They were stricken dead for agreeing together to deceive the apostles and cheat the treasury of the Church," answered Grandpa. "If that's what you mean, Charley, you are right."

"That's it, Grandpa. You can understand a fellow every time."

"Wasn't it rather severe, Grandpa, to strike them dead for such an offense as that?" asked Carrie, somewhat timidly, as if uncertain whether her question was precisely proper.

"It was severe, undoubtedly. But their offense was very great; they lied to God really. Such hypocrisy and deception as theirs would quickly have ruined the Church if allowed to go unpunished; so God in this fearful manner checked it at once. It put a stop very effectually to what might have grown and become disastrous in that little company of disciples."

"I've no doubt they deserved it, or it would not have happened; but, oh my! I'm so sorry for them!" was Carrie's closing lament.

POWER IN A NAME;

OR, A LAME MAN CAUSED TO LEAP.

“ON one of those days of joy in the early Church,” began Grandpa, “Peter and John went to the Temple at the hour for morning prayer. At one of the entrances known as the Beautiful Gate a lame man sat begging. His poor feet were so crippled that he had never been able to walk or even stand on them. As Peter and John came near, he asked them to give him something, holding out his hand or his hat to receive it.”

“Just as beggars do now,” exclaimed Charley.

“Yes. When Peter and John stopped and looked at the man, he was sure they were about to give him something. Then Peter spoke and said to him in a loud voice, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

“And then what happened?” asked Carrie, eagerly, as Grandpa stopped.

“Read it in Acts iii, 7, 8.”

Carrie quickly turned to the place named and read: “And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God.”

“Hooray for him!” shouted the enthusiastic Charley; “he learned to walk quick, didn’t he?”

“Rather so, I think,” added Grandpa. “Walking, running, and jumping have to be learned usually, but this man gained his full

power so completely and was so glad that he bounded about as if he were crazy. His old crutches flew to the right and the left, and the people, seeing this unusual exhibition and hearing the man's shouts of joy, ran together, and thus in a few minutes an immense crowd was gathered."



"He gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them."—Acts iii, 5.

"I should think so. It wouldn't take long to gather a crowd by such means in one of our streets," said Mary.

"When Peter saw the crowd that gathered, he could not neglect the chance it gave him to tell about Jesus. He did tell about Him



THE DISCARDED CRUTCHES.

most earnestly; but this stirred up the priests fearfully—such preaching, and that, too, within the Temple grounds, they would not permit. They were getting afraid that the followers of Jesus would take all the religious work of the day, leaving them nothing to do and nobody to rule. To stop this preaching the priests sent the Temple police, who quickly came upon Peter and John and arrested them—so they spent the night in jail."

"Shame on them!" exclaimed Mary. "What had Peter and John done that they should be locked up? I'm indignant at such work."

"No harm came of it, however, out rather good. It made a great excitement, and the rulers were afraid to punish Peter and John. Their cause was far too popular just then, and the healing of this lame man had made them more than ever popular. Then, too, Peter's little sermon before he was arrested had won immense numbers of converts."

"But how did they get out of jail?" asked Carrie, with much concern.

"They spent the night there, and the next morning were brought before the Sanhedrim. Annas and Caiphas, those unjust judges who had condemned Jesus, were there. They were bitter and blood-thirsty as ever, but they were on the unpopular side and had to be very cautious now. They began by asking Peter, By what power or by what name have ye done this? That question gave Peter a chance. He who had so lately denied Jesus made good amends for it now. He launched forth in his reply, and gave them such a sermon on Jesus as made their ears tingle."

"What did he say? Tell us about it, Grandpa; it's getting awfully interesting," urged Carrie.

"You will find it in brief in Acts iv."

"Here it is!" exclaimed Mary. "I will read it." So she read: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made

whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

"That's got the ring, I tell you," said Charley, with his enthusiastic slap of the hand on his knee. "No more scare for Peter now; no more, no more!" sang he to one of the familiar airs of the Jubilee Songs.

"True, Charley. The scare was on the other side now. Peter made such an impression that the members of the Sanhedrim were puzzled, and asked among themselves, What shall we do?"

"What did they do? The old tyrants! That time they got into a hole and pulled it in on top of themselves, didn't they? Pity they ever got out again!"

"Charley, Charley, what do you mean?" asked Mrs. Reed, in seeming distress at the boy's queer talk.

"Nothing, mother; nothing, only Peter's all right. Tell him I say so! Go on, please, Grandpa."

"Peter was all right this time, Charley. The Council made up its mind that it could do nothing but try to scare him, so Peter was told not to dare to speak at all, or to teach in the name of Jesus. This brought up both Peter and John, who plumply and plainly said: Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

"Good again!" shouted the boy.

"After another effort to scare Peter and John the Council let them go. At once they sought their own people, the disciples, and told all that had happened. Nobody was frightened, but all were the more determined to be faithful and true.

FREED FROM PRISON;
OR, DOORS OPENED IN A STRANGE WAY.

“GRANDPA,” began Charley, “did Peter ever get into prison again?”

“Yes, my boy; and on one occasion—some ten years after the case of which I told you last night—he got into prison, but he also got out of it in a very strange way.”

“Tell us about that, please,” said Carrie, in her winning way that always prevailed with Grandpa; the others adding, “Please do.”

“So many people had become Christians,” began Grandpa, “in the ten years following the ascension of Jesus that many wicked rulers became alarmed about them and tried to destroy them. Chief among these was one Herod, who had come to be governor of Judea. He captured James, the brother of John, and, for no crime whatever, beheaded him. Seeing the Jews were greatly pleased with this wicked zeal, he captured Peter also and determined to kill him in the same way.”

“How cruel!” exclaimed Mary. “And yet hundreds of Christians were served just so in those days—were they not?”

“Yes; thousands and tens of thousands of them—women and children as well as men. Herod knew how great a man Peter was in the Church; so to keep him very safely he put him in charge of sixteen soldiers, two of whom were in his cell all the time, he being chained to both of them. Time went on till the night before the day appointed for his death. Peter was neither afraid nor unhappy in the prospect of this final suffering, for that last night he lay asleep between the two soldiers who were his death-watch.”

"But, Grandpa, how unhappy Peter's friends must have been, knowing where he was and what was so soon to happen!"

"Yes, Mary; I have no doubt they were unhappy. But, like true and good people, they went to God with their trouble. Day and night they prayed; and the last night of his appointed time came, but he was still in prison; God had not delivered him. So anxious were they that none of them went to their homes that night, but they stayed together praying for their dear friend."

"They were more distressed, I guess, than Peter himself was," said Carrie.

"Yes. He seemed wholly resigned to God's will. They did not see how they could do without him; the idea that on the next day he should be led forth from prison and his head be hacked from his body was more than they could endure. But what could they do? They had but one Friend who could really help them; that was God, and to Him they went."

"Did they kill Peter the next day, Grandpa?" asked Charley, impatient to know the result.

"No; they did not kill him. And just there is the wonderful part of the story. While Peter slept and all the prison-guards were in their appointed places, suddenly the prison was filled with light and an angel appeared in Peter's cell. In an instant he aroused Peter, lifted him up as his chains fell off, helped him to throw his garments about himself, led him out through the doors and gates, all of which opened of themselves seemingly, brought him into the public street, walked with him till he was safely away from the prison, and then left him alone and free."

"Good!" shouted Charley, slapping his hand vigorously upon his knee. "Good! I'm glad they didn't get a chance to chop Peter to pieces."

"What did Peter do when the angel left him, Grandpa? He must have been sorely puzzled by this wonderful performance," added Carrie.

"He was puzzled. First he thought he was dreaming; then he was bewildered. He did not know what to make of it. But directly he came fairly to himself and felt sure it was the Lord's work. After a moment's thought he started off for the house of a disciple whose name was Mary, and whose son was the well-known disciple, Mark, the same who afterward wrote one of the gospels. Peter knew he would find a welcome at that house. Nobody was asleep there. It was midnight, but they were all up praying for Peter. When his knock at the door was heard they were startled; perhaps they were frightened. They may have thought an officer of the law had come to arrest some other of their company, and carry him off to prison and to death."

"I don't wonder they were scared; I would have been, I'm sure," said Carrie.

"And yet, my dear, a little girl of that company was brave enough to go out to the gate, dark though the night was, and listen, and inquire, to find whether officers were there, or who it was that knocked."

"She was brave," exclaimed the girls.

"And her bravery was so pleasing to God that He put her name in the Bible. It is said in Acts xii, 13, A damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda."

"Rhoda?" repeated Carrie. "I never heard that name before. What does it mean?"

"It means a rose. Her good, brave act was fragrant as a rose, and so long as people love the Bible they will know her as a brave girl whom God honored."

"I guess she wasn't long in letting Peter in, was she?" said Charley.

"Well, yes; rather long. When she found out it was he, she was so pleased that she did not stop to let him in, but ran into the house to tell the good news."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Charley. "And let Peter stand there in the



RESCUED BY AN ANGEL.

cold, where the police might catch him and haul him back to prison. She was smart, she was."

"But Peter was not discouraged; he kept on knocking. He had spoken to her and she had recognized his voice, but then she ran off. He might have felt cross at her, but he did not. He waited and knocked, but Rhoda was back again in the house telling the people about it."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Charley again, "just like a girl, you bet! —forget the very thing she went to do."

"If she had a brother," answered Mary, with a laugh, "I'll warrant he sat still and let her run to the gate, night though it was. That's just like a boy."

"She ran in, as I said," resumed Grandpa, "and Peter kept on knocking. The people in the house thought the girl had gone crazy. Some thought it was his ghost, supposing him to be already dead. But she was positive that it was Peter himself. Then they went out and opened the gate, and the man they had been praying for was a free man among them. They were both surprised and glad. Peter then told them what the angel had done and how he had set him free."

"But didn't they try to catch Peter again?" asked Charley.

"I suppose they did," answered Grandpa, "but after this talk at Mark's house Peter left Jerusalem for another place, where Herod could not reach him. Not long after this Herod died suddenly, and Peter was then free to return to Jerusalem."

"Well, that's the grandest get-out ever I heard of," exclaimed the boy.

PICKING UP A PASSENGER; OR, THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

“THOSE early Church people must have had real jolly times,” began Charley, in one of his merriest moods. They remind me of what the mission-school girl said. She liked Old Testament lessons best, because they had more fun and fighting in them; but Peter and the rest of them had lots of this.”

“Charley Reed!” exclaimed Mary, in a reproving tone, “will you ever learn to respect Bible people?”

“I do respect them. Wouldn't harm 'em for the world. I just mean that they are like us. I used to think them all angels without any feathers, but they're just men and women, and boys and girls, same as we are. I like them. Please, Grandpa, tell us about some more of them.”

After this rattling start Grandpa rubbed his glasses, smiled at the boy's boyishness, placed his glasses on his nose, and began:

“If by jolly times Charley means they had times full of fun and frolic, then he is wrong. If he means, as I think he does, that they passed through strange and exciting scenes, then he is right.”

“That's it, Grandpa, you were a boy yourself. Girls can't understand *us*, can they?”

“The leaders of the Church in those early days were very earnest workers. At times they seemed very odd men. There was one named Philip, who flew around from place to place, always at work, and everywhere successful in doing good. One time he was busy in Samaria with a great revival of religion, but busy though he was, he felt it his duty to start right off for Jerusalem, some sixty or sev-

enty miles away. From there he felt he must go off in a south westerly direction by a certain road which led to a place called Gaza. Why this should be done he did not know, nor did he stop to ask. Off he started, and in a few hours he was tramping along the appointed road, looking for something to do for the Lord."

"Well, that was a queer way to act," said Mary. "Why didn't he wait till he knew what he was to do?"

"Simply because the Lord told him to Arise, and go. To go, was what he had to do in the case. If he were to sit at that roadside in idleness, to tramp it in weariness, or to work there at the hardest of work, he was ready. As Tennyson in his splendid poem says of that brave troop, the Light Brigade :

" 'Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.'"

So Philip went, obeying orders without a question, and not knowing for what he was sent."

"That was grand of him, I'm sure," said Carrie. "And what did happen when he got there?"

"By and by he saw a chariot coming down the road from Jerusalem. In it rode a man who was a high officer under one of the queens in Africa. Around the chariot were soldiers and servants, for so great a man never traveled without a suitable escort. As the chariot came near Philip saw that the man was reading the Scriptures, and he felt it his duty to go and speak to him."

"Without an introduction?" asked Carrie.

"Yes, without that. So Philip ran to the chariot, and heard the man reading aloud. He was reading in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, about the sufferings of Christ. The exact words Philip heard him read were these: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: In His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall

declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth. Without a moment's delay Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading. The man frankly said he did not so much as know of whom the prophet was writing. Then he asked Philip to step up into the chariot and ride with him."



"He desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."—Acts viii, 31.

"So he picked up a passenger, as they used to say in the country, where we were last summer."

"Yes, Mary, and a true helper the picked-up passenger proved. Philip understood that text. He knew that the prophet spoke there

of Jesus, and he went on telling about Jesus to his noble hearer. So clear did Philip make the truth that the man understood and believed it at once."

"Good!" exclaimed Mary. "He was the right man in the right place that time."

"And did he become a Christian?" asked Carrie, seeming surprised that such quick work could be made with a man.

"Yes, he became a Christian. But it is only fair to remember that this man was a devout and intelligent worshiper of God. From his home, away off in Ethiopia, he had gone all the way to Jerusalem for no other object than to worship. While there he had bought a roll of parchment on which the prophecy of Isaiah was written, and he had paid well for it, I'm sure."

"Written?" interrupted Charley, "why didn't he buy a printed Bible and be done with it?"

"There were no printed Bibles. Printing was not known for hundreds of years after that, and there was no Bible, except the Old Testament. It cost him more to buy that copy of Isaiah than a large and elegant family Bible would cost us. He bought all he could, and he did well to get that prophecy, which tells so much and so clearly about the Saviour."

"Why," exclaimed Mary, "we can get beautiful Bibles for fifty or sixty cents; Isaiah and all the other books, too!"

"What did they do after the man became a Christian?" asked Charley.

"They jogged along down a very beautiful road, which even now abounds in flowers, and is called the Valley of Roses. After a few miles they came to a fountain. Philip had told his friend of the command Jesus gave, that His disciples should be baptized; when he saw the water, therefore, he said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized? There was nothing hindered him. He believed on Jesus; there was water; and there was a man who could properly do the service. It is then said, in Acts viii, And he com-

manded the chariot to stand still : and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him. The account in Acts then says, He went on his way rejoicing."



PHILIP'S FOUNTAIN ON ROAD TO GAZA.

"That was too lovely," said Carrie. "He was just as willing to obey God as Philip was. They were just splendid, both of them. I do honor such men."

"Yes, and there was more in it than their obedience. This new convert went to his home in Africa, carrying the Scriptures in his hand and the gospel in his heart. When there he told what he had learned of Jesus, and others were led to the truth. So it came to pass that Philip's odd journey resulted in sending the gospel to the very heart of Africa."

"It may interest the children," said their mother, "for me to read a little sketch of that fountain. I found it in a work describing Palestine. It says: The fountain itself is a rich, solid structure of elaborately carved white marble. It stands on the face of the hill, the water spouting out profusely at a point about fifteen feet from the ground, and falling into two basins before it reaches the bed of the valley. The water is finally conducted into a large stone reservoir, about twenty feet square and quite deep, into which a flight of stone steps descends. If this fountain existed in apostolic times, and if the eunuch came upon it here, it is not strange that he should have said, See, here is water: What doth hinder me to be baptized?"

"I've just found," said Mary, "a hymn we sung in church a few Sundays ago. These men remind me of it. It says:

"In all my Lord's appointed ways
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not! ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you.

"Through floods and flames if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where He goes;
Hinder me not! shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

"Well quoted, Mary. Those are very appropriate verses," was Grandpa's closing remark.

A BONFIRE OF BOOKS; OR, STRANGE HONORS FOR FAITHFUL PREACHERS.

"I HAVE told you about several early workers in the Church," began Grandpa. "There is another of whom I want to tell you a few things, for he was a wonderful man."

"I know whom you mean, Grandpa," said Carrie, with a pleased confidence. "You mean Paul, don't you? I know he was a very wonderful man."

"Yes, dear; you are right. He was a man of great ability and thorough education. He once was very active in persecuting the Church, but at last he became just as active, and, indeed, more so in building it up. He made long journeys through countries where the gospel had never been preached, and founded many churches. In his first missionary journey he and Barnabas, who traveled with him, came to a heathen city called Lystra, in what is now called Asia Minor."

"I know where that is," said Carrie. "It is north of the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. I saw it in my geography a few days ago."

"I am glad you remember this location. When Paul and Barnabas reached Lystra they preached to the people every day. While at this work they came across a man who had been lame all his life. This man believed what he heard preached, and Paul determined to cure his lameness. Looking at him steadily, Paul said in a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. In an instant the man both leaped and walked."

"Just as Peter's man did at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple."

"Exactly, Carrie. No sooner did the people see what was done than they began to shout, The gods are come down to us! The gods are come down to us! Some time before this one of their poets had told the story that Jupiter and Mercury, two supposed gods of the



"The priest of Jupiter . . . brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people."—Acts xiv, 13.

Romans, did once visit that country in the form of men. When the people saw Paul's wonderful act they supposed that he and his companion were these same gods come back again."

"That was grand, wasn't it?" said Charley. "I'd like somebody to think me an old heathen god, I would."

"Near to Lystra a temple had been built in honor of Jupiter. In a few minutes the priest who had charge of this temple came hurrying along with oxen, garlands, and incense, ready to offer sacrifice to the two preachers. When they saw this, however, they protested, rending their clothes, as people then did to express great horror, and declaring themselves not to be gods who might be worshiped, but simply men."

"Pshaw!" shouted Charley, "I'd have let them do it, just a little, anyhow. I'd have had some fun."

"But God would not have seen much fun in Paul and Barnabas allowing men to worship them. It would have been very wrong in them to permit it. Had they allowed it, how could they have turned about and preached the gospel to those men? As it was, however, Paul turned his refusal to be worshiped into a good, honest talk about the true God. He was willing to refuse honor for himself that the Lord might be honored the more."

"He was a splendid man, wasn't he, Grandpa? I love to hear about such people," said Mary.

"I'm glad you do, my dear, and I hardly need remind you that to be like them is even better than to love to hear of them."

"I want to be like them, I'm sure," was her answer; "but," added she, in a somewhat uncertain way, "I'm sure I come far short, though I try hard."

"Try, try again, Mary. Paul did not become great in a day, nor can you. But in much the same line I will tell of a remarkable bonfire in honor of Paul."

"That's the ticket," shouted Charley. "Bonfires and big times! They're what make boys fat."

"A bonfire," Carrie added, as if in doubt whether she understood aright.

"Yes. And it came about in this way. When Paul was preaching in the city called Ephesus he did a great many wonderful works. There were a large number of men living there who called them-

selves magicians, and pretended to do magical acts. They were in great favor with the people, and as a class were quite rich. Some of them tried one day to cast an evil spirit out of a man, but instead of doing it they only enraged the man, who leaped upon them, beating them furiously and tearing the clothes from their backs, so that they fled for safety, battered, bruised, half-naked, and glad to get off with their lives."

"Ha! ha!" roared Charley. "Got enough for their pains that time, did they?"

"Yes, they got enough. Of course, everybody heard about it, and it quite disgraced the magicians, while Paul, and the Lord whom he preached, were the more honored. So it came to pass that many of those who had practiced these curious arts gave them up entirely. They had very costly books of instruction on these subjects, all of which they brought to Paul, and burned them publicly in the street. In this way those men showed that they gave up their old ways, turned to the true God, and put themselves under Paul's control for all the future."

"That was making thorough work of it, wasn't it, Grandpa?" asked Mary.

"Yes. What they burned was of great value. We are told the price of the burned books was fifty thousand pieces of silver. For how many pieces of silver was Jesus betrayed?"

"For thirty," answered all.

"And about how much of our money was that?"

"Not more than twenty-five dollars," answered Mary; Carrie adding, "It may have been as little as four dollars and fifty cents."

"Probably twenty-five dollars was the sum. If the same piece of silver is meant in the account of the bonfire, how much money did it cost?"

"About forty thousand dollars," said Mary.

"My stars!" shouted Charley. "That was a whopper of a bonfire! Cost forty thousand dollars. Whew!"



A BONFIRE OF COSTLY BOOKS.

"Remember that any book in those days cost an immense sum of money. They did not know how to print at that time. Every book had to be written with a pen from beginning to end. And very few men could write at all, much less write well enough to make a book. Magic was an unusual subject, too. Few men could make a book on that; so, for these reasons a few books might easily have cost the sum named. All their books, however, were brought by these men and publicly burned."

"Why didn't they sell them, if they didn't want them any more?" inquired mercantile Charley.

"They believed the books to be bad, and they would not allow others to be harmed by them. What was not good for themselves to keep they would not sell to others. That was right. Better lose thousands of dollars than do wrong yourself or harm the soul of another."

"They were more conscientious," said Mary, "than a boy I read of. He was gathering a lot of toad-stools into a basket. A man who saw him said, 'Those are not mushrooms; they are toad-stools, and are rank poison.' 'It don't make any difference,' said the boy, 'I'm going to sell them.'"

"Good!" exclaimed Grandpa, rising from his chair, and Charley said:

"Well, that's the jolliest bonfire story I ever heard. I'll tell the boys about that to-morrow, you bet!" And so the evening party broke up.

IN THE PATH OF DUTY; OR, TEARS AND TERRORS POWERLESS.

“TELL us more about Paul, Grandpa,” was Carrie’s opening request. “We love Paul, and want to know more about him and his work.”

“Time forbids that I tell you much, grand as he is to talk about. But I will tell you how firm he was amid tears and terrors as he went on in his path of duty. After he had made several missionary journeys, he decided to go once more to Jerusalem, though he knew the Jews there hated him fearfully and would try to kill him. His friends knew this too, and did all they could to dissuade him from going.”

“Strange that he should run into danger,” said Mary.

“He did not run into it blindly or willfully; he felt it to be a duty, and that was enough for him. Where duty called he went, regardless of every inducement to stay away. For instance, the vessel on which he was sailing stopped at Miletus, the seaport of Ephesus, where Paul had many friends. He sent word to Ephesus, and a lot of the church folks came to see him. He told them where he was going, and that he knew bonds and afflictions awaited him there; but, said he, none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.”

“That seems very strange,” said Mary. “I don’t see how any one can be willing to give up life; but good people can, I suppose.”

“After talking with them in this way and telling them many important duties, Paul started on his voyage. The story in Acts is then told in these words: And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled

down and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship."



"They all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him."—Acts xx, 38.

"That was very sad. They must have loved him most tenderly."

"Yes, Carrie, it was sad, but it did not delay Paul for a moment. At Tyre, where the ship next stopped, a similar scene took place. At Cæsarea, their next stop, the disciples were so urgent that he should not go into danger that he said to them, What mean ye to

weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. So they had to submit, and Paul went on to Jerusalem."

"And did they harm him when he arrived there?" asked Carrie, with almost tearful interest.

"Yes. A few days after his arrival he went into the Temple with some friends, and at once a company of evil-minded men got up a commotion about it and raised a great stir. Excitement grew, a mob gathered, Paul was hustled out of the Temple, the gates were slammed shut after him, and the mob was about to beat him to death."

"Where were the police?" asked Charley, starting up as if he would run for an officer.

"They were not far off; and in time to save Paul's life their chief captain, with his soldiers, ran upon the mob, scattering it and rescuing Paul, whom they were even then beating unmercifully. Not knowing who Paul was or what he had done, the officers handcuffed him and led him away to their station in the castle near by. A great crowd followed hooting and yelling, some saying one thing and some another, so that all was confusion and uproar."

"A regular row, wasn't it, Grandpa?"

"Well, yes, Charley; I suppose it was. When they came to the entrance of the castle, the mob was so violent that the soldiers had to carry Paul up the steps, the people yelling as they once had done against Jesus, Away with him! away with him!"

"What a set!" exclaimed Carrie. "The world would have been the better if somebody had made away with them."

"Paul was not scared. He reached the top steps and then asked permission to address the people. When the captain heard Paul speak as a gentleman and found out who he was, he allowed him to address them. Paul did speak, and so much to the point that the people fairly howled with rage. To save his life the captain locked him up in the castle. After this he was never again a free man, but he was always noble, God-fearing, and courageous."

"Did Paul never get out of prison after that?" asked Mary.

"He never ceased to be a prisoner, though great liberty was generally allowed him."

"Tell us all about it," demanded the children.

"The next day after Paul's arrest he was taken before the Jewish Council for a hearing, but these men were so unfair that Paul had no chance of justice. In a little while they became so excited that the chief captain, fearing Paul would be killed, took him by force again to the castle. The next day more than forty men took an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed him."

"The vile fellows!" exclaimed Mary. "It was outrageous that they should act so."

"It was indeed. But their plot came to the knowledge of the chief captain, who ordered out his soldiers, and that night at nine o'clock, under an escort of four hundred and seventy men, Paul was started for the residence of the Governor at Cæsarea, some sixty or seventy miles away."

"Why did they send so many men?" asked Charley.

"Because the Roman government always did things in a strong way. A mob had threatened this man's life, and the chief captain meant to protect him and awe them. At Cæsarea Paul lay in prison, but with considerable liberty, for more than two years. The Governor and his friends often talked with him, but they hoped he would offer them money to let him go free. At last a new Governor came into power. He looked into Paul's case and would have discharged him, but Paul as a Roman citizen had demanded a trial before Cæsar the Emperor, as was his right. To the Emperor the new Governor decided he should go, therefore, and in this way Paul was sent out of Palestine, and finally reached Rome, which was then the great capital city of the world."

"Tell us about that, Grandpa," urged his little hearers.

"Not to-night," darlings," said he. "It is too long a story, including a shipwreck and many other items. To-morrow night we may."



ASSAILED BY THE MOB.

THE IMPERIAL CITY;

OR, AT THE END OF THE COURSE.

“YOU promised us another talk about Paul,” began Charley; “about a shipwreck, too, and I’m awfully anxious to hear it. I stove a hole in that old boat on the mill-pond last summer; that was the nearest to shipwreck that ever I came.”

“Paul came nearer than that, my boy,” answered Grandpa, with a look of amusement. “His boat actually went to pieces.”

“Tell us about it, please do,” urged Carrie and Mary.

“When the new Governor at Cæsarea came into office, he quickly arranged to send Paul to Rome. In company with a few personal friends and some other prisoners, and in charge of a squad of Roman soldiers commanded by a centurion named Julius, they set sail in a little coasting vessel, which, after a slow voyage, reached Myra, a city of Asia Minor. On the way they touched at Sidon, where Paul went ashore and had a delightful time with his friends.”

“Why, wasn’t he a prisoner?” asked Charley.

“Yes, but he was not a common culprit who would attempt to escape. He was treated more as a friend and companion by Julius. At Myra they took a larger ship which was bound for Italy and was laden with wheat. Including sailors, soldiers, and passengers, there were two hundred and seventy-six persons on board. It was late in the season. Winter was at hand with its rough weather, and those vessels were very clumsy and unseaworthy. They were not rigged like our ships. The sails were fastened to great yards which were hauled up to the top of the masts, leaving the sails hang from them to catch the wind. The steering was done by two immense paddles,

or oars, one on each side of the stern. Some vessels were fitted for oars to row with also. No sooner had they started than they were driven out of their course, and reaching a harbor called Fair Havens, in the island of Crete, Paul urged them to winter there; but the weather just then seemed good, so they did not take Paul's advice,



ANCIENT WAR VESSEL WITH SAILS AND OARS.

though he told them they would be wrecked. Hardly had they started when a terrible storm broke upon them, driving them out of their course again and into danger from two great shoals which all the sailors of that day dreaded. For two weeks they were tossed and driven, not seeing sun or stars, and the compass not being known, they had nothing to guide them in steering the vessel."

"They must have been terribly frightened," exclaimed Carrie.

"That beats my old boat on the mill-pond," said Charley.

"When matters were at the worst and all hands despaired of being saved, Paul began to comfort them, assuring them that though the vessel would be lost, yet all the crew and passengers should be saved."

"How did Paul know that?" inquired Charley.

"Read Paul's own explanation from Acts xxvii, 23-26."

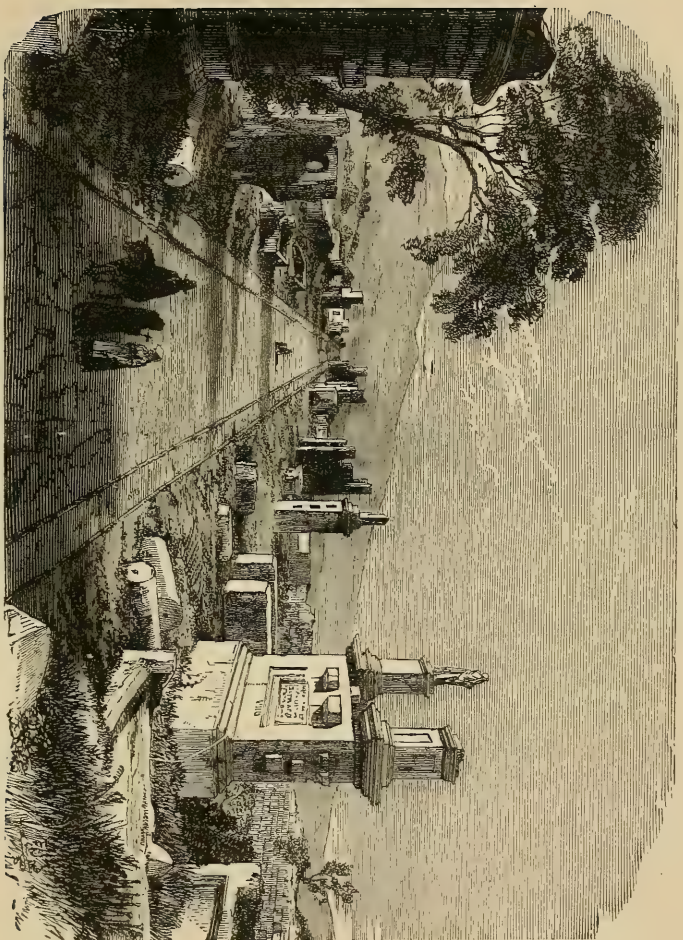
Carrie found the place in a moment and read: "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar, and lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island."

"Soon after this the sailors found they were in shallow water, and that it was fast getting more shallow. It was night. They could not tell where they were, so they cast out four anchors, and by these held the ship till day dawned. They could then see land, but what land they did not know. Discovering what they thought was a harbor, they tried to run the ship into it, but the bow struck the beach and the stern was broken to pieces by the fury of the waves. Those who could swim jumped overboard and swam for the shore. Others reached it on pieces of boards and by other helps, and at last all were saved."

"What did they do?" "Was there anybody there to hurt them?" "How did they get along?" were some of the questions asked at this point of the story, to which Grandpa answered:

"It proved that they were on the island now called Malta, at its northeastern part, in what is now known as St. Paul's Bay. The island was inhabited, but the wrecked men were treated very kindly. Paul did great service there by healing sick persons and preaching the gospel. They stayed all winter, and then took a ship bound for Italy, where, in a few days, they landed at Puteoli, on the Bay of

THE APIAN WAY AS IT NEARS THE CITY OF ROME.



Naples. Here friends met Paul, and after a few brief delays he went on to the Imperial City, Rome, where Cæsar, the ruler of the world at that time, had his palace and made his home."

"Is Rome now like it was then?" asked Mary. "It would be a great pleasure to see the streets along which Paul went, and the houses where he stayed."

"The street along which he passed from Puteoli to Rome can be seen. It is called the Appian Way, and though now lined with ruins and to a great extent deserted, yet it reminds one of Paul at every step. In Rome Paul lived for a time in his own hired house, but in charge of a soldier. He was heard before Cæsar also in the royal Hall of Judgment. During these years Paul wrote several of his epistles, and had with him as a companion and assistant Timothy, whom he loved to call his son in the gospel."

"And then what happened?" asked Carrie. all the party sitting with breathless interest.

"On the last days of Paul," continued Grandpa, "history is not clear. There is some reason to think he was set free for a time. More likely he was allowed to go on *parole*, as it is called; that is, on his word of honor to come back when wanted. Meanwhile, a new and blood-thirsty Emperor, Nero, had come to the throne. He began fiercely to persecute Christians. Directly Paul came under his cruel attention, and soon he was sentenced to death. He was dignified and calm as the end drew near. Some of his most tender messages were written when he was about to die; that, for instance, of which I spoke once to you, where he says: The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. The time came; he was ready to be offered; he was led to the place of execution; he laid his neck on the block; the sword of the executioner severed the head from his body; he was dead!"

"Dear, good Paul!" exclaimed Carrie, with tearful eyes. "He was just splendid!"



THE PRISONER AND HIS COMPANION.

LESSONS FROM NATURE; OR, NEW VIEWS OF OLD SUBJECTS.

"T O-NIGHT I will talk about three pictures which I found to-day among my papers. By their help we may gain some new views of old subjects." With this opening remark, Grandpa laid a picture upon the table, and asked the children to look at it carefully, and say what they made of it.

"It looks like a menagerie," said Charley.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Mary. "A rather small menagerie. Why, it's a caravan in a desert. They have stopped for rest and lunch under the shadow of that great rock. Isn't that so, Grandpa?"

"You are right. In the distance you see the glare of the sun, and other camels and men coming up to rest in the cool of this shelter. Such a spot is a great relief to travelers in those wide desert stretches. Hot, weary, hungry, and thirsty, as these parties must certainly be, they hail with joy every such shelter."

"What has this picture to do with Bible stories?" asked Carrie.

"Turn to Isaiah xxxii, 2, and find your own answer."

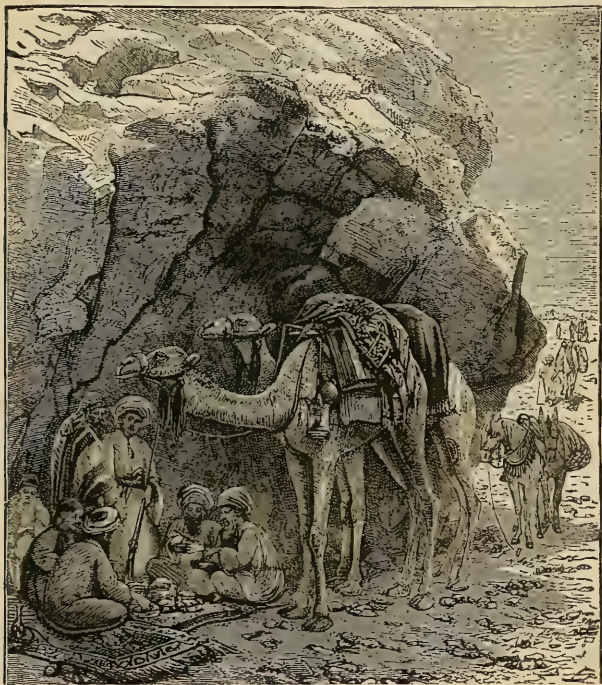
Carrie turned and read: "And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

"Who is the man who is all this?" asked Grandpa. "See what he is—a hiding-place from the wind; a covert, or place of concealment, from the tempest; as rivers in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a wearisome land. Who is the man who is all this?"

"Jesus!" exclaimed every one of the party.

"Yes. And what are these travelers finding under this rock?"

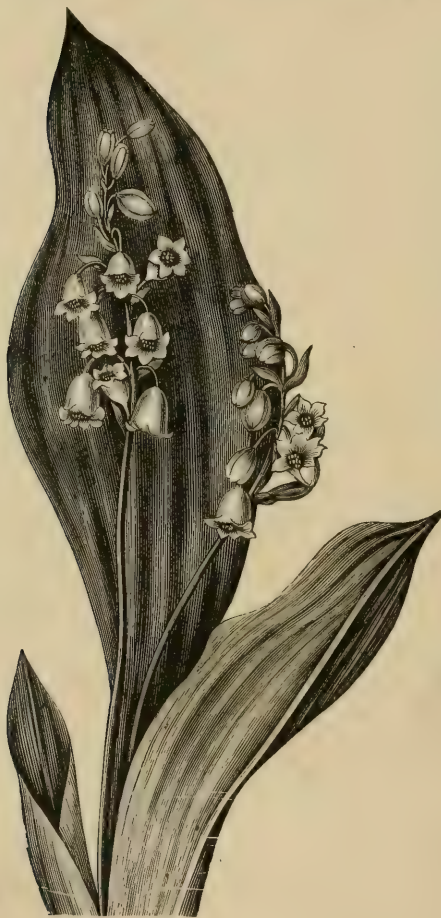
"Rest;" "coolness;" "refreshment;" "time to eat;" "time to talk;" "a good time generally," and other answers were popped in by the children, as they looked at the picture, after which Grandpa asked:



RESTING IN THE SHADE.

"What, then, is Jesus to us?"

"Everything that is nice," answered Carrie. "Everything that makes life's cares less and its burdens lighter, and that fits us to go on with fresh strength and new courage," added Mrs. Reed.



"First rate," answered Grandpa, "and much more might be said about Him. Just as these travelers are cool and comfortable, though surrounded by a burning desert, so the Lord's people are happy and at rest, though in a sinful and sorrowful world."

Grandpa, at this point, laid out another picture, and asked the children to look at it. "Why," said Mary, in an instant, "that's a lily of the valley. I know them, and they are very sweet."

"What else can be said of them?"

"They are very modest little flowers," ventured Carrie. "They have no high stems lifting them away up in the air; and the flowers are so small and beautifully formed, and so delicate of color; and then they don't turn their faces up as if they wanted to stare at you, but they nod their pretty

heads as if hiding, and so they wave in the breeze, and are ever so nice and modest."

"Well said, my dears. From what you tell me may I say they are not gaudy, conspicuous flowers, but they are modest, lowly, gentle, beautiful of color and form, and withal very sweet of fragrance?"

"Yes, yes," was the unanimous verdict.

"Well, now, in the Song of Solomon the Lord says, I am the lily of the valleys. What does He want us to learn from this?"

"That He is humble and lowly," said Mary. "That He is very beautiful and sweet," said Carrie. "That He touches our finest feelings, and affords us the most delicate joys," said Mrs. Reed. "That He's nice to have around the house," said Charley.

"Correct; every one of you is right. Jesus is all that. But do not forget that while He is the lily of the valleys, at the same time He is the shadow of a great rock."

"He's both big and little, great and small, high and low, strong and gentle, and so on, and on, and on; isn't he?" asked Mary.

"Rather an odd way to say it, but a good way, I'm sure. He is to us as a rock or a lily; as a lion or a lamb; as God or man. You are right in your quaint reply, Mary."

Another picture was now laid on the table. "What have we here?" asked Grandpa.

"A lady with three pet birds," was the prompt reply.

"Why do you say *pet* birds?"

"Because, wild birds wouldn't be so tame," was Carrie's reply. "They would fly away, but these little darlings are happy as though they were under their mother's wings. Precious little dears! I wish I had such a bunch of tame birds."

"What would you do with them if you had them?" asked Grandpa, smiling very kindly.

"Do? Why, I'd love them and feed them and clean their cages, and—oh! I'd just take the best care in the world of such sweet, helpless little dears. That's what I'd do."

"This is a fancy picture, of course," added Grandpa. "I do not know anybody who ever had birds tamed in this way, though I am sure many such cases exist. How small and helpless these little fellows are, and yet they nestle together upon their protector's finger, as much as to say, We are safe and happy; you will do for us all that we need. For a lesson from this, let Mary read Luke xii, 6, 7."

Mary read these words: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"That is just too sweet," said Carrie. "God remembers every little sparrow and cares for it, and we are of more value than many of them. That is very precious."

"And will not He be as good in His care of you as Carrie would be of a lot of pet birds? Is Carrie kinder than the Lord?"

"Why, no!" exclaimed all.

"Any of us would be kind to birds," said Carrie; "but God is better than we and will be kind to us, I'm sure. We are worth more than many flocks of birds."

Grandpa nodded assent to Carrie's argument and then told this little story: "Years ago, when many colored people in our land were slaves, a preacher of their own number was talking to them from this text about the sparrows. He repeated over and over the fact that five sparrows cost but two farthings, but two farthings, but two farthings, and yet, said he, God doesn't forget one of them, not *one of them*. Think of that, you fifteen hundred dollar darkey."

"Good!" exclaimed Mary, laughing. "A fifteen hundred dollar darkey was certainly safer than a half-farthing sparrow."

"So Jesus, by teaching from nature, assured His disciples that they should be sheltered and fed. Happy are all they who enjoy His care and comfort!"



CARING FOR THE BIRDS.

THE VENERABLE PRISONER; OR, BROAD VIEWS FROM A NARROW ISLAND.

"**T**O-MORROW I leave you," began Grandpa, "for a long visit with your uncle. This will make just one hundred times that we have seated ourselves for an evening's chat on Bible stories, and now, for our last evening, I propose to talk about the last book of the Bible."

The children looked sad at this opening statement of Grandpa's; but knowing his departure was positively fixed, and comforted with the fact that their father was soon to be home to stay, they choked down their sad feelings and asked Grandpa to do what he proposed.

"When the Apostle John had become very old," Grandpa went on to say, "he was banished to Patmos, a dreary, rocky little island, situated about one hundred miles off the shores of Asia Minor, in the Ægean Sea. It has mines of tin upon it, and in John's day prisoners were sent there to work these mines for the Roman Government, which owned the island. The story is that John had been sentenced to death by being thrown into a huge kettle of boiling oil. The cruel act was performed; but God preserved him, and the oil did him no harm; whereupon he was sent to Patmos to spend the rest of his life in the mines."

"How old was he then, Grandpa?" asked Carrie.

"About ninety years old, but still full of vigor. Whether he did work in the mines or not, we cannot say; but while on that island the Lord came to him and revealed many wonderful things. Through John He sent messages to the seven principal Churches of that day, and showed him also a great many wonderful sights by which things

THE BELOVED DISCIPLE ON THE ISLAND OF PAIMOS.



yet to happen were made known. The end of all earthly things was clearly explained also, and the final home of the saints, the New Jerusalem, was gloriously described. All these splendid truths are found in that last book of the Bible, which is a record of what John saw and heard when he was an exile upon that miserable rock."

"Why did they send John there, Grandpa? What harm had he done?"

"None at all, Carrie. He was sent there simply because he loved God and tried to serve Him faithfully. But his stay there has given us one of the most beautiful books of the Bible. It is full of love and light and glory. But let me read you a few of its finest passages."

The demand that Grandpa should read was unanimous. Indeed, nobody felt much like talking, because he was so soon to leave them. He turned over the leaves of the big family Bible and, after a few moments, said:

"In the fifth chapter is an account of a great company about the throne of the Lord Jesus, and John says: They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"What a grand song!" exclaimed Carrie.

"In the seventh chapter he tells of a company dressed in white robes, and in answer to the question who they are, it is said: These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore

are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"How lovely!" exclaimed both girls together.

"In the nineteenth chapter is the account which suggested to the great musician, Handel, his famous Hallelujah Chorus—one of the grandest musical compositions of the world. John says, And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

"What does he mean by the voice of many waters? Waters don't say anything," added Charley.

"On the rocks of Patmos the waves of the sea dashed continually. By day or by night John heard their ceaseless surging. Sometimes in a storm it sounded like the deepest thunders. That was his way of explaining the unending and mighty volume of praise which heaven poured forth to the Redeemer."

"How grand!" added Mrs. Reed, the little folks simply listening in silence, as though the sound of that mighty song really reached them.

"In the twenty-first chapter," added Grandpa, "is a description of the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem. John says: And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no

night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

"That's a better place to live in than the Garden of Eden was, isn't it?" said Charley, in a mood much more serious than was usual with him.

"I will read one passage more," said Grandpa, whose kind face fairly glowed with pleasure as he talked of these splendid things. "In the last chapter of all, John says: And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

Grandpa's voice trembled as he ceased to read; a tear trickled down his cheek; he rose, kissed each of the party, and went to his room, while the children declared they never could live without Grandpa and his charming after-supper talks.

